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A MANUAL  
ON THE  
INSPIRATION  
OF  
SCRIPTURE  

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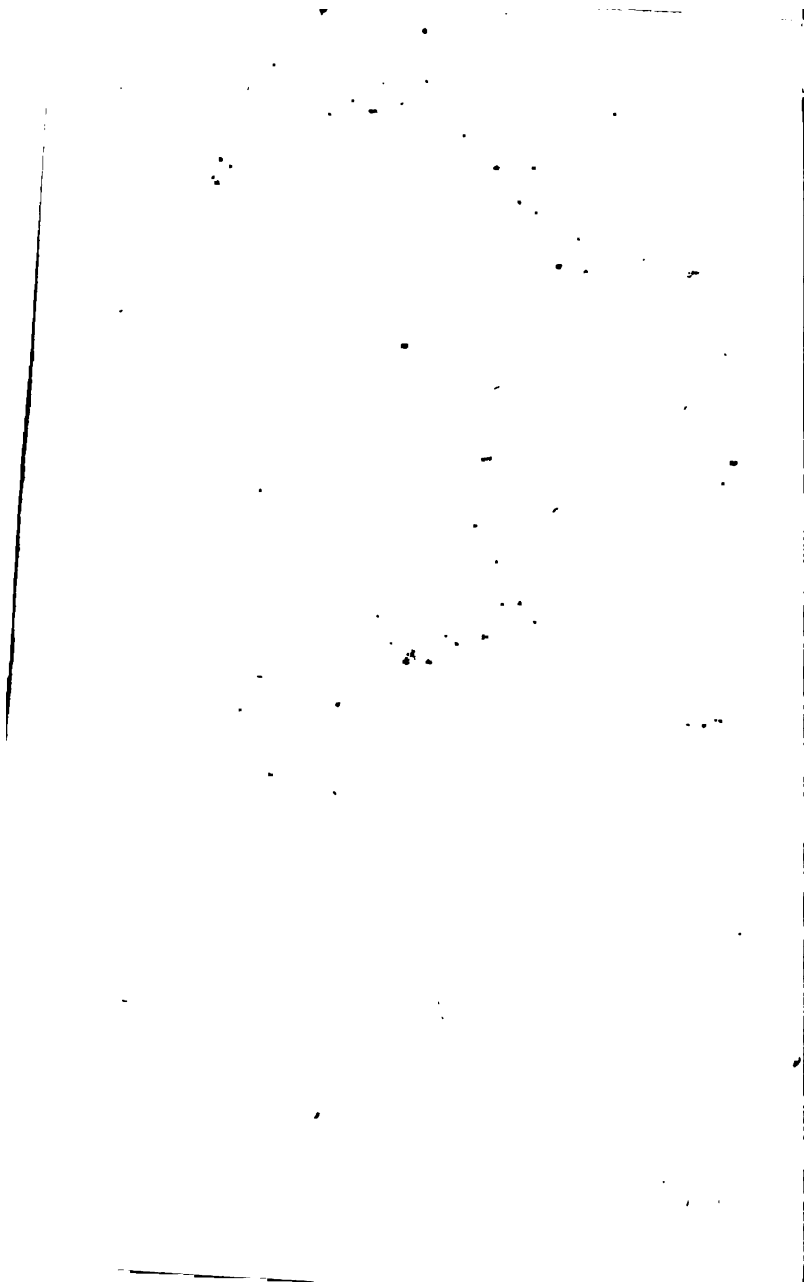
REV. C. D. MARSTON.



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A MANUAL  
ON  
The Inspiration of Scripture.

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BY THE  
REV. CHARLES DALLAS MARSTON, M.A.,  
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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE following pages are designed to furnish a brief but comprehensive manual on the Inspiration of the Scriptures. That such a book is wanted seems to be generally felt. The treatises which have appeared are for the most part so large and so learned that they are necessarily beyond the reach of the mass of readers : or they take up but a portion of the subject : or, again, they are interwoven in matter which relates to other branches of religious truth. There is still room for a volume which shall handle the subject within moderate limits and in a popular style. The present attempt is made with the hope of filling that room.

It must surely be of the greatest importance that the many persons who are capable of an intelligent consideration of the matter, should have within their reach a book which, by bringing together some of the



opinions, proofs, and objections, which connect themselves with the study of the Inspiration of the Bible, should present such a view of the whole question as may inform their minds, and, by God's blessing, establish their hearts.

At the same time, I cannot but feel the solemn responsibility of publishing such a treatise as the present. When so many good and thoughtful men confess that the subject is surrounded with difficulty; when such different opinions have been entertained; and such various conclusions arrived at, even by those who admit Inspiration, and bow with reverence to the authority of the Bible; when, too, volumes of so much depth, learning, and extent, have been written to establish some particular views; it may appear presumptuous to send forth so small a book to discuss so vast a subject. There does not, however, seem any necessity to shrink from doing so.

Commentary  
on Heb. i. 6.

Dr. Owen's words encourage me: "The opposition made to every truth is so various, and from so many hands, that not the least contribution of evidence unto it can be neglected with safety." Humble, therefore, as my contribution may be, it is given under the sincere conviction that no effort for God's

glory and the establishment of His truth is unworthy of being made. Error and blasphemy, uncertainty and doubt, prevail in many quarters, and threaten to make farther advances. If it please God to use this effort to check their growth and decrease their influence, even in a small degree, I shall indeed be thankful.

Beside its profit to the general reader, it is hoped that a treatise of this kind will be found useful to the younger brethren in the ministry, to candidates for that holy office, and to those of the laity whose occupation leads them to visit from house to house as Scripture Readers or City Missionaries. For these classes especially some amount of information is necessary as to the theories and proofs of Inspiration, and the way in which difficulties and objections may be met. Those also who are more directly engaged in the education of the young will find here a summary of what it is important,—perhaps one may say, necessary,—to teach on a subject in which every professing Christian should feel a lively interest.

The volume makes very little, if any, claim to originality. Having formed certain conclusions, I

have endeavoured to state them simply and plainly. Quotations are freely given, in the notes, from the works of other writers: as such passages not only serve to illustrate the text, but also form an agreeable addition to the book. I would, however, state that I do not necessarily identify myself with the general tone of any writer by extracting a particular passage from his writings. Controversy, as such, has been avoided, and if one or two remarks seem to be of a controversial tone, this is only for the sake of truth and caution.

My work is dedicated to the glory of God in His cause of divine truth. It goes forth with the earnest prayer that His Spirit may use it as the means of leading some, and more firmly attaching others, to the conclusion so well expressed by Bengel: "That which is written ought we to hold fast, that alone, that entire: and so to keep it as it is made known."\*

\* "Quod scriptum est, id solum, id omne, tenere; et, ut ostenditur, ita observare debemus."—*Gnom*, in *Apoc.* i. 1.

WORKS QUOTED AND REFERRED TO IN  
THE FOLLOWING TREATISE.

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THE INSPIRATION OF HOLY SCRIPTURE, ITS NATURE AND PROOF. By WM. LEE, D.D. Second edition, 1857.

VERBAL INSPIRATION. By Rev. JOSEPH BAYLEE, D.D., of St Aidan's College.

THE PLENARY INSPIRATION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES. By L. GAUSSEN, D.D. Small edition. Johnstone and Hunter.

THE ELEMENTS OF THE GOSPEL HARMONY. By B. F. WESTCOTT, M.A.

DR. CHALMERS' WORKS, Vol. IV. Sutherland and Knox, Edinburgh, 1850.

HORNE'S INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF THE SCRIPTURES. Fourth edition, Vol. I.

BUTLER'S ANALOGY OF RELIGION TO THE CONSTITUTION AND COURSE OF NATURE.

ALFORD'S GREEK TESTAMENT. Second edition, Vol. I.

THE INSPIRATION OF HOLY SCRIPTURE. Five Sermons, By the Rev. LORD ARTHUR HERVEY, M.A.

OWEN'S WORKS. Johnstone and Hunter. 1853.

STIER, "THE WORDS OF THE LORD JESUS." T. and T. Clarke, Edinburgh.

PASCAL'S THOUGHTS ON RELIGION.

LIFE OF WICLIF. LE BAS. Rivington, London, 1832.

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## CHAPTER I.

### What is Truth?

IN the prayer which the Lord Jesus offered just before His crucifixion, and which is recorded in the seventeenth chapter of St. John's Gospel, John xvii. 17. we find these words addressed to God, "Thy word is truth."

This expression, "Thy word," which occurs "Thy word" explained. again in the chapter, must be taken to signify the declaration of the truth of the living God, the utterance of His revealed will, published by any person or persons specially enabled to make known the things of God. Concerning this it is asserted, "Thy word is truth." To the question, "What is truth?" the highest reply we can give is, "The word of God." Whatever it announces, whatever it contains as its subject, whatever it reveals, however

high, or vast, or stupendous, may be, ought to be, must be, received as true. The truth in relation to divine and supernatural things finds its embodiment in the word of God. Genuine words, sincerely uttered, are but thoughts in another shape ; they are the workings of the mind manifesting themselves outwardly to all who care to be observers. The Word of God, then, must needs be the truth, for it is the expression of the Divine mind, which is itself the Truth.

Is it applicable  
now?

Can the assertion of the Lord Jesus, "Thy word is truth," be applied to any special object now? As an abstract statement, it stands and ever will stand : the Word of God is and must be truth. The question is, what may be called the Word of God? Now that Jesus is gone from earth and does not speak Himself, so as to "give unto us the words which the Father gave to Him," to what can His saying apply? What may we "keep" as the Divine Word? What, if anything, may we regard as "truth"—"sanctifying truth?"

John xvii. 8.

To the Bible?

One claimant presents itself for this distinction. The Bible, including the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, demands to be

thus regarded. A record of events and particulars full of interest, it asks to be considered an *inspired* record, so that its contents may be looked upon as not only interesting, but important. Can it make good its claim to inspiration?

The question is of vast consequence. These <sup>Importance of the enquiry.</sup> are days of agitation and ferment in the world, — in the mental world, as well as that of politics and commerce. Among the many vexed questions of the times, few are more mooted than this—the Inspiration of the Scriptures. Some would reject it altogether: some admit it only partially: some hardly know what to think, what to believe. There can be nothing of greater moment than a right conclusion on the merits of this question. A volume is before us which claims to be from God,—which deals with the most serious concerns,—which professes to impart the secret of life and eternal joy. Surely it becomes all who have access to this volume to enquire into the grounds on which its claim rests, with a view either to removing their doubts, or strengthening their belief. The advocates of the Inspiration of the Scriptures need not fear enquiry. On this,



as on other religious subjects, there is enough to convince, if the arguments be duly weighed.\* For many centuries certain writings have passed as, in a peculiar sense, the Word of God. Jews have kept some of those writings with a jealous care.† Christians have received the Jewish deposit, and have guarded it, with some subsequent additions, as jealously as those from whom it came.‡ Israel and Christendom, the Church be-

\* "What religion, then, has to fear is not the most searching criticism of the contents of Scripture; not any fundamental inquiry into the laws of physical phenomena; not the fullest examination of every vestige upon the field of nature left by the footsteps of time:—her true source of alarm is the danger to their faith which those persons must encounter who content themselves with superficial information, or partial knowledge." —*Les* p. 421.

† "It is clear indeed what trust we repose in our sacred writings; for, although so many ages have now passed away, no man has dared to add, or take from, or alter anything in them. Indeed it is implanted in all Jews from their very birth, to esteem these writings as the ordinances of God, and to stand fast by them; and in defence of them, if need be, cheerfully to die."—*Josephus against Apion*. Book i., chap. viii.

‡ *The following quotations serve to illustrate the universal consent of the Christian Church to the Doctrine of the Inspiration of the Scriptures.*

"It is a common and a just remark of Christian writers, from the earliest times, that amid the various contests in which the Church has had to engage with the different forms of heresy, both sides have appealed to the divine authority of the Bible."

"The absence of dogmatic teaching on this question, during the first fifteen centuries of the Church, affords a clear illus-

fore, and the Church since, the publication of the Gospel, has looked upon these Scriptures as the Word of God : and, as it held the sacred gift, has been wont to gaze on it, and then looking up to God, to say, "Thy Word is Truth." Is this a delusion? Were writers of what we should call pamphlets and tracts, living and composing at intervals through sixteen centuries, able to keep up with success the amazing system of thus operating on mankind? Were numerous generations of Jews most grievously cheated by a few designing or enthusiastic men; so cheated as mentally—not to say spiritually—to admit the claim of their productions to be divine? Has the universal Church, since Pentecost, A.D.

tration of the harmony of opinion which prevailed respecting it : while the unhappy distractions of modern times sufficiently account for the want of any authoritative decision, since the sacred precincts have been invaded. This absence, however, of recognized theory or system serves to exhibit, in bolder relief, how profoundly incorporated with the Christian consciousness of those times was the belief in the inspiration of Scripture ; and undesignedly represents its depth, its fervour, and its source."

"This belief (as to the nature and value of the sacred documents committed to their charge), was no merely speculative trust ; nor did it rest upon some general feeling that the writings which taught the doctrine of revealed religion were deserving of reverence :—their conviction of the divine source of that faith which the Bible unfolds, was not more firm than their conviction that the origin of the records which contain its history was, in like manner, divine."—*Lee*, pp. 72, 74, 86.

34, been as thoroughly deceived in this respect : that Church with which the Lord promised that His Spirit should be, to guide it into all truth ? Are the millions who at this day hold the Bible to be the Word of God, given over to strong delusion to believe a lie ? Have we nothing express, nothing definite, to which we may look as divine revelation ? Or, on the other hand, is there not ground for clinging to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, keeping hold of the Bible, and believing that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God," and that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost ?"

2 Tim. iii. 16.

2 Pet. i. 21.

It is to this point that I would lead the reader's mind. It is proposed in the following pages to consider, in as simple a manner as possible, the subject of the Inspiration of the Scriptures. If, by the help of the Holy Spirit, the investigation be taken up aright and pursued carefully, it cannot fail to be of use.

## CHAPTER II.

### Preliminary Propositions.

IN order to prepare the way for the clearer treatment of the subject, it will be as well to state one or two introductory points.

(1). *It is not impossible that there should be a revelation of God's will to man.* Revelation possible. If it be, the impossibility must rest either on the side of God or of man. It cannot be on God's side : for with Him nothing is impossible. Of course, as God, He *can* make Himself known, and that *in any way* He may please. He can enlarge the faculties which He has given to His rational creatures to any necessary extent. He can prepare the minds of men to receive such information as He may see fit to give. To deny this, would be to limit the divine power, to say that God cannot do that which is not at all contrary to His nature, and so to deny that He is God. Nor is there any impossibility on man's side :

for it is not impossible that an intelligent rational creature should learn something of his Creator. Much, almost all, that man knows is imparted knowledge. Very few men make discoveries: and even in the case of those who do, their discoveries are few compared with the facts which they gather, or the opinions which they form, from other men's labours and communications. So that the reception of imparted knowledge so far from being impossible with man, is the rule of his mental acquirements. If God, then, can give—which He can—the revelation of His divine will, man can receive it.

Revelation  
probable.

(2). *A revelation of God's will is not improbable.* God and man stand towards each other primarily in the relation of Creator and creature. This Creator is perfectly good, full of love, desiring the highest happiness of His creatures. What, then, is the full happiness of man? what his highest possible enjoyment? It must be the knowledge of God. "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness," is indeed a true saying. Happiness, in its best sense, must consist in the contemplation of excellence, and in the imitation of it, as far as possible. Then, if God desires the full happi-

Psalms xvii. 15.

ness of His rational creatures, He can carry out that desire by making Himself known for their contemplation and imitation ; and not only so, but by declaring His will, according to which they may frame themselves to study, love, and copy Him. As He *can* do this, is there not the strongest probability that He *will* do it ?

And if we consider man's case, we can see no improbability in a revelation. For, in the relation spoken of above, man must understand in some measure the things of God, if he is to be a really happy creature. What would God be likely to require at the hands of an intelligent rational creature, in order to secure happiness ? Simply this :—to know and love Him. Now, love is dependent on knowledge. We cannot admire what we do not know ; we cannot love that person with whom we have no acquaintance. Therefore, unless we know God, we cannot love Him. But how can we know Him, except by revelation ? How can His will be ascertained without expression ? The light of nature cannot shine so as to reveal the hidden things of the Lord. The book of creation may tell something of Him, as “ His eternal power and god- Rom. i. 20. head ;” but we cannot “ by searching find out

Job xi.  
xxxvii 23.

God." To know Him as He may be known, there must be a revelation made to us. If then, on man's part, the knowledge and the love of God are necessary for his real happiness, and such happiness is desired by the Creator, there is no improbability, but every probability, that He would give such a revelation of Himself, as would lead to love, and so to happiness.

But further, it is probable that God would make Himself known by revelation, *in order to remove erroneous ideas about the Deity*. Many have taught that the book of nature and creation reveals sufficient of God to secure the right knowledge of Him. Now this book is one which all men have had before them since man existed. Its pages have been lit by sun, and moon, and stars ; its words have found their utterance in the songs of unnumbered birds, in the whispers of the groves, in the babblings of the brooks, in the roaring of the sea, in the mighty voices of the thunder. Yet what has man learned from it as regards the fulness and truth of the nature of God ? The loveliest parts of the creation are blotted by the foulest ignorance of the Creator. Where "every prospect

pleases," there too often "only man is vile." Polytheism, atheism, superstition of the grossest, maddest, silliest kinds, speculations full of vague and dreamy uncertainties,—these are surely proofs of man's want of the real knowledge of God ; yet they abound even where the book of nature has opened its most attractive pages. Now, all such developements of ignorance and superstition quite prevent man's rendering that honour which is due to God, as the Creator and Lord of all : and, since God's honour and glory must be dear to Him, and He must rejoice in the homage of His creatures, it is highly probable—one might say certain—that He would reveal His will and His truth, to make men know that superstitious vanities are to be abandoned, and that He, the true God, is to be adored alone.

All these considerations make a revelation probable, as we have seen that it is possible.\*

(3). It may now be remarked that if such a revelation, both possible and probable, be granted and published, *it must be by means of Inspiration.* INSPIRATION IS A SPECIAL INFLUENCE EXERCISED BY GOD THE HOLY GHOST ON

Necessity of  
Inspiration.

Inspiration,  
what?

\* See Horne, vol. i., pp. 2 and following.



THE MINDS AND SPIRITS OF CERTAIN PERSONS, FOR THE PURPOSE OF PREPARING AND ENABLING THEM TO COMMUNICATE SUCH INFORMATION CONCERNING THE THINGS OF GOD AS WOULD MAKE KNOWN HIS WILL TO MANKIND.\* The *inspired Scriptures* are those writings which we assert were composed under that influence. *Inspired men* are those who spoke or wrote, under the same influence, as exponents of the divine truth and will.

\* *The following definitions of inspiration have been given :—*

“By Inspiration, I understand that actuating energy of the Holy Spirit, in whatever degree or manner it may have been exercised, guided by which the human agents chosen by God have *officially* proclaimed His will by word of mouth, or have committed to writing the several portions of the Bible.”—*Lee*, p. 27.

“This term (Theopneustia, *i.e.* Inspiration) is used for the mysterious power which the Divine Spirit put forth on the authors of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, in order to their composing them as they have been received by the Church of God at their hands. “All Scripture,” says an Apostle, “is theopneustic” (*i.e.* inspired by God).—*Gausson*, p. 23.

“Inspiration, in the highest sense, is the immediate communication of knowledge to the human mind by the Spirit of God : but it is commonly used by divines, in a less strict and proper sense, to denote such a degree of divine influence, assistance, or guidance, as enabled the authors of the Scriptures to communicate religious knowledge to others, without error or mistake, whether the subjects of such communication were things then immediately revealed to those who declared them, or things with which they were before acquainted.”—*Horne*, vol. i., p. 515.

With regard to this term "Inspiration," it is necessary to dwell here at some little length on the fact of its pointing out, as stated in the definition, a *special* influence of the Holy Spirit. In a subsequent section, when dealing more particularly with the Bible itself, the question of the "*Inspiration of the Scriptures*," strictly speaking, will come under consideration. There is an *ordinary* influence which the Holy Spirit exercises on all who are the subjects of divine grace. They are "born of the Spirit;" the Spirit "dwells in them;" they are "led by the Spirit of God;" the Spirit "guides them into all truth;" "comforts" them, gives them "access" to God, "helps their infirmities" in prayer. But this clearly is quite distinct from that influence which is to be properly called Inspiration.\* This appears from the nature of the case: for the best and holiest of men have

Inspiration a  
special in-  
fluence.

John iii. 6.

Rom. viii. 11,  
14.

John xvi. 13.  
John xiv. 16.

Eph. ii. 18.  
Rom. viii. 26.

\* "It is altogether essential that we should bear in mind, the distinction between that extraordinary influence under which the sacred writers have composed their respective works, and that ordinary actuation of the Holy Spirit, to which in like manner the term *inspiration* has been assigned. From neglecting or refusing to discriminate between those two aspects of the divine agency, a greater number, perhaps, of erroneous views with respect to the present subject have taken their rise than from any other source."—*Lee*, pp. 232, 233. This author gives an interesting note to show that among the proposed "alterations in the Book of Common Prayer, pre-

2 Pet. i. 21.

Psalm cvi. 33.

James iii. 2.

*disagreed*, their opinions have clashed, their statements and views have been oftentimes contradictory. Must we not have a standard on which to depend? Shall "the will of man" be all to direct us? If so, we must stand bewildered amid a maze of suggestions and speculations; which, indeed, is the very evil which philosophy, falsely so called, has made rife in the world. Again, the best of men have *erred* in word and in ordinary writings over and over again: yea, the very men, some of whose writings are asserted to be of a divine character, "spake unadvisedly with their lips," and "in many things offended all." Nor can we depend on any of their writings, if they were only under the general influence of the Holy Spirit, for this, through the evil force of human nature, did ~~not~~ always secure their being in the right. So that to deny *special* Inspiration, is to overthrow revelation

pared by the Royal Commissioners for the revision of the Liturgy in 1689," there is evidence of a desire to avoid such a use of the word "inspiration" as might be liable to misconstruction. "It is twice used in the Prayer Book in the sense of the *ordinary* operations of the Holy Spirit: viz., in the Collect in the Communion Office, and in that for the Fifth Sunday after Easter. It was proposed in the former place to change 'inspiration' to 'operation;' and in the latter, to substitute a new Collect from which the word 'inspiration' is omitted."

altogether : and one need not hesitate to say, with Stier :—"The inspiration, in the more limited sense, belonging to the Scripture, which is to be distinguished from the Spirit in the thinking and life of the Apostles and Prophets in general,—this *inspiration*, properly so called, we steadfastly maintain, and without it we know and acknowledge no Scripture."\* Not to insist now on the force of the word 'Scripture, (as we have not yet touched on the *written* Word,) and taking it as equivalent to revelation, we must conclude that there can be no published revelation from God, on which man may unhesitatingly depend, and to which he may confidently turn, unless Inspiration be something extraordinary and peculiar.

But besides what has just been said, it will appear that there is a difference between these two kinds of influence, by considering that in the case of those who were under the *ordinary* influence of divine grace, and for whom this *special* influence is also claimed, a marked distinction is made between the effects of the one and those of the other. Witness the prophets of the Old Testament so constantly introducing

\* Vol. iii., p. 193.

their prophecies by "Thus saith the Lord," "The word of the Lord came unto me." Similarly in the case of Agabus, his prophecies are expressly ascribed to the Holy Spirit. And in the history of David there is a very striking instance of the distinction thus drawn. David and Nathan are introduced. Both these men were on occasions *especially* "inspired," the one as Psalmist and Prophet, the other as Prophet : both, too, as holy servants of God, were under those *ordinary* workings of the Spirit which God's servants in general enjoy. In the beginning of the chapter to which reference has been made, each spake out of a heart full of holy gladness : gratitude moves the king, a sweet complacency is expressed by the prophet : there is a clear heavenly-mindedness about each. "David said to Nathan the prophet, Lo, I dwell in an house of cedars, but the ark of the covenant of the Lord remaineth under curtains. Then Nathan said unto David, Do all that is in thine heart, for God is with thee." But how different is Nathan's word to David the next morning : "Thus saith the Lord, thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in." There had been a special revelation of the

Acts xi. 28 :  
xxi. 11.

1 Chron. xvii.

Ver. 1, 2.

Ver. 4.

divine will made to him. This clearly shows Ver. 3, 4. that the heart of a child of God, actuated by the general influence of the Holy Spirit, may have its desires overruled by special intimations of the will of the Most High. "David was not always so ἐν πνεύματι (in the Spirit),\* as when he sang prophetic psalms." His being a "holy man of God," is not one and the same with his being specially moved by the Holy Ghost, according to the words in 2 Pet. i. 21.

To what has been said it may be briefly added, that this special influence has been exercised on men who were quite strangers to that ordinary working of the Holy Ghost, which operates in all the true people of God. Such was the case with Balaam; such was the case also with Numb. xxii.—xxiv. Caiaphas. This is indeed a great mystery: but John xi. 49—52. it is also a providential fact, too important to be overlooked in the consideration of this subject.

So then there is an influence, a guiding and

\* Compare Stier, Vol. iii., p. 194.

In the expression ἐν πνεύματι, the force of ἐν is "under the influence of." So Rev. i. 10, "I was (ἐν πνεύματι) under the influence of the Spirit on the Lord's Day." So also Mark v. 2, "There met him.....a man (ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῃ) under the influence of an unclean spirit." So also Luke ii. 27, "He came (ἐν τῷ πνεύματι) under the influence of the Spirit into the temple."

instructing influence, exercised by the Spirit of God, independent of the mind of the Spirit in the common routine of the spiritual life. There is, in fact, an especial work, which may be called *the work of inspiration* in a strict sense,\* and which must not be identified with *the work of general grace* in the mind and spirit of those who embrace the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.†

\* "Dr. Donaldson writes : ' Every manifestation or declaration directly from God, nay, even His direct and distinctly-cognizable agency in the world, is a revelation, and in whatever way He makes this revelation, His Spirit is present, or there is an inspiration.'—*Christian Orthodoxy*, App. v. p. 309. "An inspiration." Surely this is mere logomachy, (mere strife of words). Of course, if writers will call every divine act in which, as a Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Holy Spirit takes part, by the name inspiration, it is in their power to do so ; but I protest against their fixing such a sense upon the term as used in the following pages."—*Lee, Preface to Second Edition*, p. xi.

† A very useful passage will be found in Lee, page 244, Note 2.

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### CHAP. III.

## Inspiration of the Scriptures : Explanation of the Term.

We may now address ourselves to the con- Subject stated.  
sideration of the main point of the subject of  
these pages, which may be thus stated :—*The  
inspiration necessary for a divine revelation is  
claimed, on good and substantial grounds, for the  
Bible, the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and  
New Testaments.\**

We have seen, *generally*, that Inspiration, pro- What is meant  
by Inspiration  
of the Scrip-  
tures.  
perly so called, is to be regarded as distinct from  
the ordinary influence of the Holy Spirit, ex-  
ercised on the minds and hearts of believers.  
And now that we come to consider the *particular*

\* See Art. VI. of the Church of England. It is no part of the present subject to enter into the question of the Canon of Scripture. Finding the Bible before us, we have to enquire into its inspiration.

“The question, Are these inspired Books?—is a truly different one from the question, What Books are inspired?”—*Chalmers*, Vol. iv. p. 414.



case of the Bible, the question presents itself,—What is the force of the expression, “The Inspiration of the Scriptures?” It will be necessary to enlarge somewhat on the meaning of the term, before taking up the proofs which serve to establish the fact of Inspiration.

Two elements  
in the Bible:

The Bible presents to us, when we view it as claiming to be a revelation, two elements, one divine, the other human ; it professes to originate from God, it certainly has been written by man.

Giving rise to  
two classes of  
opinions.

These two elements serve to form two heads, under which all the various opinions concerning the Inspiration of the Scriptures may be classed.

We have,—

Mechanical  
theory.

(1). The theory which so elevates the divine element, as to reduce the human element to the lowest possible degree. This has been called the *mechanical* theory. According to it the writers became, as it were, machines under the divine influence.

Dynamical  
theory.

(2). The theory which recognizes, more or less extensively, the human element acting conjointly with the divine. This has been called the *dynamical* theory of Inspiration. According to it the individual abilities of the writers served a purpose more or less distinct and important.

Those who have contended in favour of the mechanical theory have spoken very explicitly ; thus,—“Not only the action of writing, but its effects also, words, points, and letters, are inspired.” “The writers did not bring anything to the Scripture beyond the pen of the ready writer.”\* “Their tongue in what they said, or their hand in what they wrote, was no more at their own disposal than the pen is in the hand of an expert writer.”† “Whether we consider the *matter* or manner of what they received and delivered, or their receiving and delivering of it, they were but as an instrument of music, giving a sound according to the hand, intention, and skill of him that strikes it.”‡ “Every apex of the written word is equally divine, and as immediately from God as the voice wherewith or whereby he spake to or in the prophets.”||

It does not appear to be necessary to receive this theory of Inspiration ; nor indeed, in strictness, is it possible to carry it out. For we

\* Quoted in Lee, App., C., p. 447.

† Owen, Vol. xvi., p. 298.

‡ Ibid. p. 299.

|| Ibid. p. 305.

Mechanical  
theory,  
expressed  
strictly,

Cannot be re-  
ceived.

find the peculiar characteristics, the style, the mental powers, of the several writers all appearing in their several compositions : and this fact shows that whatever peculiarities marked the inspired person were made use of, not suppressed.

Errors grafted  
on dynamical  
theory to be  
rejected :

In adopting, however, the dynamical theory, it is necessary to guard against the many and subtle errors which have been broached in connection with it.\* For instance, some have taught that there are *degrees* of inspiration ; making out three, or four, or even five degrees, some of which are necessary for one kind of composition, some for another. This is a pure hypothesis, and has no foundation in Scripture, nor apparently any in sound reason. Others again have taught, not that the Bible *is* the Word of God, but that the Bible *contains* the Word of God. Without saying expressly that such and such portions are uninspired, they assert that from defective information, forgetfulness, or similar causes, errors exist in the statements of Scripture.† Such teaching is most

\* This subject is treated at length in Lee, App. C.

† After mentioning the theories of several Protestant writers whose names are given, Gaussen adds : "According to these

dangerous ; for if *I* admit error of this kind in one place, how can I refuse to allow *your* charging it in another ?\* Others again put Inspiration in the lowest place, treating it only as an influence common to all so called good, or even to all gifted men. This 'Inspiration' is something so thoroughly foreign to that with which we have to do, that it is impossible to compare the two, or to bring what concerns the one to bear upon the other. It may, however, be as well to refer the reader to what has been stated in pages 15 to 17 and note, so far as relates to the influence of the Spirit on good men as servants of God.

theories, the divine light with which the intellect of the sacred writers was enlightened, might suffer some partial eclipses, through the inevitable effect of their natural infirmities, of a defect of memory, of innocent ignorance, of popular prejudice ; so that traces of these have remained in their writings, and so that we can perceive in these where their shadows have fallen."—p. 118. Are not the following words, from Dean Alford's Commentary, liable to lead an unformed judgment astray ? "I believe it to be a form of acknowledgment on the part of the Evangelist, that *he did not know exactly into what part of this period to bring the incident so introduced.*" (Luke vi. 12.) And again ; "The break between verses 25 and 26, is harsh in the extreme, and if Luke had any materials wherewith to fill it up, I have no doubt he would have done so." (Luke xxiii. 25.) Other instances might be given. Surely this is not the way to speak of an *inspired* Evangelist.

\* "By the giving up of a universal inspiration, we are left without a Bible,—for we are left to guess as we may when it is, or when it is not, that the voice speaketh to us from heaven."—*Chalmers*, Vol. iv., p. 360.

But the truth of  
the theory to  
be adopted.

While thus guarding against the errors with which some have encumbered the theory of dynamical Inspiration, we may safely embrace the truth of the theory itself. It presents to us the whole spirit and being of the writers of the Scriptures pervaded by the divine influence of the Holy Ghost, and elevated for the contemplation of the things of God ; their minds informed, their faculties expanded, their memory freshened, their judgment made clear, their perception quickened, their truthfulness ensured. It enables us to rest confidently on the grace of God, who has thus given to man a revelation of His will, clothed in language which suits our capacities and claims our sympathies, because it so evidently reflects the capacities and sympathies of the men who wrote the Scriptures. Thus setting before us the writers with all their powers sanctified and enlisted for the various compositions which the Holy Spirit designed, it calls upon us to receive those compositions as infallible, the work of the Holy Ghost, expressive of the mind of God, supremely authoritative, whether they convey to us history, prophecy, doctrine, or rules for practice. "The Holy Spirit em-

braces the entire activity of those whom He inspires, rendering their language the word of God." \* "If we combine the outward and the inward—God and man—the moving power and the living instrument—we have a great and noble doctrine to which our inmost nature bears its witness. We have a Bible competent to calm our doubts, and able to speak to our weakness. It is not an utterance in strange tongues, but in the words of wisdom and knowledge; it is authoritative, for it is the voice of God; it is intelligible, for it is in the language of men." †

In addition to the phrases "mechanical" and "dynamical" Inspiration, it is also customary to speak of Inspiration under the distinctions of "verbal" and "plenary." The former of these terms has been so applied as to be tantamount in its strictest sense, and when carried to its fullest extent, to the result of the mechanical theory. Such, however, is not a correct use of the term, as will presently be

\* Lee, p. 33, who quotes 1 Thess. ii. 13. Compare 2 Sam. xxiii. 2.

† Westcott, pp. 7, 8.

Plenary.

shown : \* and there is little doubt that this incorrect use of it has been the cause of the objection which is felt to the term "verbal Inspiration." The latter has been thus defined and remarked upon by a recent writer : "The Inspiration of the sacred writers I believe to have consisted in the fulness of the influence of the Holy Spirit, specially raising them to, and enabling them for, their work,—*in a manner which distinguishes them from all other writers in the world, and their work from all other works.* The men were full of the Holy Ghost—the Books are the pouring out of that fulness through the men,—the conservation of the treasure in earthen vessels. The treasure is ours, in all its richness : but it is ours as only it can be ours,—in the imperfections of human speech, in the limitations of human thought, in the variety incident first to individual character, and then to manifold transcriptions and the lapse of ages." † While the definition here given makes it appear that plenary and dynamical Inspiration may be considered as equivalent, the remarks added to

\* "The true theory of verbal inspiration does not make men machines."—*Baylee*, p. 66.

† Alford, *Prolegomena to Greek Testament*. Vol. i., p. 21.

the definition unfortunately leave ample room for all varieties of opinion, according to the ideas, more or less strict, which any one may hold on the subject.\*

It is very questionable whether any proper distinction can be drawn between the expressions "verbal" and "plenary." The true idea of a plenary Inspiration must comprehend the words of Scripture. Nor is it to be supposed <sup>Words</sup> inspired. that by not receiving the mechanical (or—if the term must be used—merely verbal) theory of inspiration, the *words* of Scripture are to be overlooked. Far from it. Oftentimes it is the case that the force and teaching of a passage rest on some special word, which is so prominent and important that clearly the Spirit dictated it. Instances of this may be seen in Matt. xxii. 43, the word "Lord" being that on which all is made to turn ; in Gal. iii. 16, where such stress is laid by St. Paul on the word "seed ;" in Heb. viii. 13, where the word "new" is dwelt on.† The mind of the Spirit is here distinctly shown in the choice of the par-

\* See remarks on Alford's Notes, p. 23, note.

† Many other instances can easily be found.



ticular word beforehand, which was afterwards to be applied, under His divine guidance, with convincing force in argument. We must evidently assume that the *words* of Scripture are stamped with the seal of the Spirit, and have a divine meaning ; that, in fact, even a single word frequently involves some great doctrine.

It is impossible to overlook this. Indeed, if we recollect that our language does but express our thoughts, it is difficult to see how the *mind* can be influenced throughout by God, and yet the words be left uncontrolled. Gaussen does not put the case at all too strongly, when he imagines a Pharisee saying to our Lord (in reference to Matt. xxii. 43—45), "Would you build a whole doctrine upon a word?" and represents Jesus as replying, "Yes, I do ; yes, I will throw myself upon a single word, because that word is God's." \*

Summary.

By the foregoing considerations we are brought to this statement as a summary :—The Bible is to be regarded as a volume composed under such peculiar influence of the Holy Spirit, by men so

\* Page 99. Some most interesting thoughts on this subject, will be found in Chalmers, vol. iv., pp. 368—376.

specially chosen and qualified for writing, that we may with all confidence regard it, in every particular, as the Word of God, and maintain "the infallible certainty, the indisputable authority, the perfect and entire truthfulness of all and every the parts of Holy Scripture." \*

The proofs of this statement will occupy the two following chapters.

\* Lee, p. 19.

The following passage from Professor Lee's Work is well deserving of attention: "In the common course of things, men of ordinary capacity have the power of clothing their thoughts and feelings in appropriate words; and, from the very nature of the case, we cannot but believe that the words adopted by the sacred writers must, in like manner, be the adequate expression of their inward conceptions, and, therefore, of that internal life produced by the Holy Spirit. But, furthermore, the same divine power which breathed this life into the soul, must be regarded as the vital principle of the language which represents it. To this utterance of that Spirit whose glance penetrates the Universe, whose intimations extend to every age; and apply to every circumstance, with a fulness and definiteness which embrace time and eternity,—to this utterance of the Spirit there is essentially appropriated that pregnant style which, in a few syllables, conveys such infinitude of meaning; which is unexhausted by all Commentators; and which possesses that marvellous capacity of translation into any dialect which has a living and human quality. The opinion that the subject matter alone of the Bible proceeded from the Holy Spirit, while its language was left to the unaided choice of the various writers, amounts to that fantastic notion which is the grand fallacy of many theories of Inspiration:—namely, That two different spiritual agencies were in operation, one of which produced the phraseology in its outward form; while the other created within the soul the conceptions and thoughts of which such phraseology was the expression."—*Page 32.*

## CHAPTER IV.

### Several Proofs Considered.

The spirit in which to prosecute enquiry. IN prosecuting our enquiry into the evidence on which the statement at the close of the last chapter rests, there must be a patient and candid investigation of the different proofs brought forward to establish the Inspiration of the Scriptures. Let us consider the following.

Antiquity and preservation. 1. *The antiquity and preservation of the Bible.*  
“I hold a Bible in my hand. It is a book the oldest in the world, whose beginnings are lost in the remotest origin of human society.” \*  
Moses, whose writings are the oldest in the Bible, lived B.C. 1571 — 1451. Homer, the most ancient of all the profane writers, has as the oldest date assigned to him, B.C. 968, i.e. 500 years later than Moses. Here, then, are writings in the Bible which go back more than fourteen centuries before Christ ; and which have

\* Hervey, p. 22.

come down to us by a preservation most remarkable, as will presently be seen. And what do they contain? These Mosaic records which are, in one sense, the very foundation of the Biblical superstructure, contain a few facts, in very small compass, about universal history, and are, for the rest, entirely taken up with the history of one particular people. Of what relates to this people much, very much, is made up of small technicalities of law, religion, and polity. Independently of their asserted sacred character, they would seem to be of very little value to the world: for Israel was a small, insignificant people, a nation of bondsmen originally, a nation always narrow-minded and peculiar. Yet, while profane poetry is silent till Homer strikes his harp, the songs of Moses and Miriam, and the rhapsodies of Balaam, have been sounding more than 3000 years: while profane history remained in its confessedly fabulous period till B.C. 753, Moses had compiled his Jewish history, touching also upon some points of general history, more than 700 years before that date; and this same record has been handed down to us unimpaired in any material respect. While law in general was but a rude thing, and gave no clear and

settled and equitable declarations for the stability of society, Israel had received statutes whose ceremonial is most exactly minute and detailed, and whose moral enactments are the very embodiment of all that is holy, pure, and of good report ; and this law, moreover, we can read this day in the same particular developement and shape and beauty which marked its force at the first. What can be said of this ? Is this system, this law, this morality, (which, be it observed, are the very life and essence of the writings which contain them all,) is all this, so peculiar, so ancient, kept through so many ages, due in its origin and preservation only to man ? Reason and truth cannot admit this.

Preservation,  
particularly.

Another word may be added as to the preservation of the Scriptures. The Jews, as well as Christians, have kept these books. "They (the Jews) preserve with fidelity and affection the very book in which Moses declares them to have been always ungrateful to God." "This book which condemns them in so many ways, they preserve at the expense of their lives. Such sincerity as this is without example in the world, and does not spring from the nature

of man.”\* “They preserve the Scriptures, they love them, and yet do not understand them.” “So long as there were prophets to support the Law, the people were negligent; but when the prophets ceased, the zeal of the people supplied their place: which is a providence too remarkable to be overlooked.”† These sayings find a striking illustration by reference to the times of Antiochus Epiphanes, (B.C. 170,) when any one found with the Book of the Law was put to death, and every copy that could be obtained was burned. But even through such risks as <sup>1 Macc. i. 56, 57.</sup> this the Scriptures were preserved: as they were also when Diocletian in the 4th century of the Christian Church, after murdering and persecuting the Christians, went so far as to command, on pain of death, delivery of their Bibles that they might be destroyed. ‡

Thus wonderfully has this collection of writ-

\* Pascal's Thoughts, chap. viii. † Ibid., chap. x.

‡ Gausсен's language may well express our amazement at the preservation of the Scriptures:—"When one thinks that the Bible has been copied during thirty centuries, as no book of man has ever been, or ever will be; that it was subjected to all the catastrophes and all the captivities of Israel; that it was transported seventy years to Babylon; that it has seen itself so often persecuted, or forgotten, or interdicted, or burnt, from the days of the Philistines to those of the Seleucidæ;—when one thinks that, since the time of Jesus Christ, it has had to traverse the first three centuries of the imperial persec-

ings been preserved. "What hath God wrought!" and why? Is it not because the Bible is His Word, given to bless and regenerate mankind?

Unity and harmony.

2. Consider *the unity of sentiment which pervades the Books of the Scriptures*. There are thirty-nine books in the Old Testament and twenty-seven in the New. These sixty-six books were written by thirty and more different individuals, at different times, and in different places, during a range of nearly 1600 years. The writers stood in various positions of life. Some were lawgivers and kings, men of education and refinement, according to their day; some were priests; some were fishermen and of other lower stations. Yet with all their diversity of feeling, taste, education, and mind,

cutions, when persons found in possession of the holy books were thrown to the wild beasts; next the 7th, 8th, and 9th centuries, when false books, false legends, and false decretals, were everywhere multiplied; the 10th century, when so few could read, even among princes; the 12th, 13th, and 14th centuries, when the use of the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue was punished with death, and when the books of the ancient fathers were mutilated, when so many ancient traditions were garbled and falsified, even to the very acts of the Emperors, and to those of the Council;—then we can perceive how necessary it was that the providence of God should have always put forth its mighty power, in order that, on the one hand, the Church of the Jews should give us, in its integrity, that Word....., and, on the other, that the Christian Churches should transmit to us, in all their purity, those Scriptures," &c.—*Pages 169, 170.*

there is a vast unity of sentiment and teaching. "The holy writers....all concur uniformly in carrying on one consistent plan of supernatural doctrines; all constantly propose the same invariable truth, flowing through different channels."\* The morality is the same; the doctrines concerning God and concerning man are the same; the cardinal truths of the fall, the need of renewal, atonement, sacrifice, and cleansing, the requirement of faith as the justifying principle,—these are all the same. No real diversity of opinion on these points can be found, nor any contradictions which mar the unity. "Whence then this harmony of Scripture? Had the writers been under no peculiar divine influence, they would have reasoned and speculated like others, and their writings would have opposed each other. But if they were inspired, if they all wrote and spoke under the influence of the same Spirit, then is this harmony accounted for; and it is impossible to account for it upon any other principle. Hence we may conclude that all Scripture is....divinely inspired."†

\* Horne, Vol. i., p. 454.

† Ibid., Vol. i., p. 455.

Gaussen says,—“One of the strongest proofs, no doubt, of the divine authority of the Scriptures is the imposing unity



Innate force.

3. Consider *the innate force of these writings in whatever language expressed.* Upwards of one hundred and fifty tongues now have the Scriptures in whole or in part translated into them ; and in each one of these the words of the Bible come with such power to the hearts of men as to illustrate the question, "Is not my word like as a fire, saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" Written originally in two languages long since passed away from living use ; one a most peculiar language, the other a tongue of exceeding richness and fulness of expression : the peculiarity of the Hebrew does not cramp the vigour of the Scriptures in their translation into another language, nor does the fulness of the Greek prevent the force of these wonderful compositions making itself felt in the most rude of savage tongues. Now, contrast this with confessedly human productions, even

Jer. xxiii. 29.

of that book, the composition of which extends over a period of fifteen hundred years, and which has had so many authors, some of whom wrote no less than two centuries before the fabulous times of Hercules, Jason, and the Argonauts ; others in the heroic days of Priam, Achilles, and Agamemnon ; others in the days of Thales and Pythagoras ; others in the days of Seneca, Tacitus, Plutarch, Tiberius, and Domitian ; and who all, nevertheless, pursue one and the same plan, constantly advancing, as if they had all understood each other, towards one sole grand end,—the history of the world's redemption by the Son of God."—*Page 341.*

with the writings of those authors whose knowledge of the mind of man has been great, and whose works, therefore, might be expected to fit the language of man : try to translate Shakespeare's rich and beautiful English into Esquimaux ; bring Milton's *Paradise Lost* to the vocabulary of some rude Eastern language ; try to express the depths of Newton's Philosophy in some dialect of Africa ;—where would be the force, the fire, the life ? Lost, or well nigh lost, in the very attempt to transfer it. Not so with the force of these writings. Why ? Because He who framed the languages of men has framed His revelation to suit them : because the everlasting Gospel is sent from heaven “unto them that dwell on the earth ; and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people :” Rev. xiv. 6. because the Scriptures express the mind of God in things which concern all men : because they are inspired. \*

4. Consider, in close connection with the foregoing remarks, *the suitability of these writings to all dispositions of men.* It is a simple fact, founded on the experience of ages, that

The Scriptures  
suit all dispo-  
sitions.

\* Some interesting remarks on the subject of this and the next paragraph will be found in *Le Bas' Life of Wiclif*, p. 231.

they are thus suitable. Language is but the expression of mind ; and therefore that which retains its force in every language will suit every developement of mind and disposition. The writings of the Bible have been found "to be equally adapted to the wants of man in every stage of intellectual progress, in every variety of political and social existence." \* Every mould of character, every stamp of mind, every degree of education, has furnished persons who have found this book suitable to their case. Among the learned who have rejoiced in scholarship and letters ; among philosophers whose soaring minds have carried them far far away up the ascending ranges of thought ; among keen lawyers who weigh evidence with scrupulous care,—this book, the Bible, has been as great a treasury of comfort, light, and spiritual wisdom, as it has been to the simplest peasant, or the rudest inhabitants of the desert, the mountain, or the isles of the sea. Surely this is a marvellous fact ; and the only reason which can be given to account for it is, that He who made the minds of men, as well as framed their languages, has blessed them with a revelation

\* Hervey, page 22.

which can influence their varied minds ; in other words, that the Bible, which thus suits all, is and must be an inspired volume.\*

5. Consider, as another step following closely on the last two, that *the authors of this volume* (so suited to all tongues and all classes of

Yet the authors were of one race, and that peculiar.

\* The following extract, from Professor Lee's Work, shows at once the wisdom of God in the selection of writers of different powers and dispositions, and the suitability, which follows from this, of the Scriptures to all classes of mind. "We here perceive each inspired writer, without any toilsome effort after some predetermined type of language or of style, at once bringing home to each conscience his sacred message ; the divine nature of which appears the more plainly from its not being confined to one order of expression, or running in one narrow channel ; but rather in its mastery over all such externals, whereby it has become the common property of the human race. No truth can be grasped under the same exact form by every intelligence :—witness the varied illustrations, borrowed from every walk of human life, or every line of human industry, or every branch of human science, which a skilful teacher adopts in order to render his meaning intelligible to each class of his hearers. From this common fact we learn how necessary it was that in the instruments selected by the Holy Spirit to convey the truth to man, an analogous variety of character should prevail. Thus only could provision be made to meet the widely different requirements of human intellect and human susceptibility : thus only could the light of divine knowledge be brought, in every variety of circumstance, to bear upon the ever changing aspects of mankind."—Page 364.

And again : "In its pages every longing of our nature, the most superficial and the most profound, will find satisfaction. Here, provision has been made alike for the tender susceptibility of the child, and the mature intellect of manhood : and whatever shadow our imperfect knowledge may allow, for the present, to rest upon certain of its statements, the mourner will still find solace in the songs of Zion, and philosophy still drink wisdom from the parables of Galilee."—Page 422.

mind and disposition), *were men of a small and most peculiar race.* With perhaps the single exception of Luke, the writers of the Old and New Testaments were Jews. They belonged to a nation shut out in a great degree from the world by special laws. As a people they were narrow-minded, prejudiced, self-exalting, despising others. Their religion, their philosophy, their traditions, all that helped to make up their nationality, helped to cut them off from such intercourse with other nations as would give what is called a knowledge of the world. We should hardly seek among the Jews of Old and New Testament times, for men eminently calculated to reflect on and analyse the course, principles, and views of human nature. Yet this nation, so peculiar, so small, so limited in general observation, furnished the writers, several of whom were men of no education, of that book which lays an appropriating grasp on every language, and adapts itself to every phase of human character. Can it be supposed that these Jewish writers were unaided? And if aided, by whom? By whom but by Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His will, —who uses the weak things of the world to

confound the mighty,—whose thoughts are not as ours? And if He aided them, then they and their books are to be considered inspired.

6. Consider *the fulfilment of prophecy*. The <sup>Prophecy.</sup> writers of the Scriptures have committed themselves to “clear, distinct, and definite announcements of future events : of events too which were the growth of centuries, and therefore exposed the predictions in question to the protracted scrutiny and probation of centuries : events on a scale which admits of no possibility of doubt or collusion, or of their being brought about by the agency of the prediction ; but which, having been announced expressly on the authority of Almighty God, ages before their accomplishment, and being at this very hour extant and patent to all, challenge the comparison of them with the Scripture predictions by every intelligent and honest man, and claim as the result of the comparison the unhesitating acknowledgement that ‘all Scripture is given by Inspiration of God.’” \*

Look at the prophecies of the ruin of certain cities and states ;—Tyre, Babylon, Nineveh, Egypt, Edom. These prophecies were uttered

\* Hervey, page 25.

when those states were in a high degree of prosperity : are they not fulfilled to the letter ? Mark again the prophecies concerning the nation of the Jews, in which much of their history was written beforehand,—so that they may be said to have a double history, one of prediction and one of fulfilment : observe how literally the history of fulfilment interprets the history of prediction ; and call the Jews themselves, now dispersed among the Gentiles, to be living witnesses of the truth of prophecy. Do they not bear one, and only one, testimony ? Or again, look more especially at the wondrous stream of prophecy which bore upon its bosom the glad news of Jesus and His great salvation : trace it as it rolls along from its first spring in Eden, gathering new volume through the long reach of Patriarchs and other holy men who recorded the promises of a coming Saviour : see it gaining at last the ocean of accomplishment, in the great facts of the birth, life, suffering, death, and glory of Immanuel. Were not all the predictions wonderfully realized ? What, then, can you conclude but that the mind of God dictated those prophecies ; that the Holy Spirit influenced the writers of them ; that He who sees the end

from the beginning, with whom past, present, future, is all one eternal *now*, used those prophets as heralds of His purposes ; and that, therefore, the fulfilment of the prophecies is a proof of the Inspiration of the books in which they are contained ? For it may be said of prophecies as of the accounts of miracles,—they enter so thoroughly into the essence and spirit of the Bible, that they and the remaining portions must stand or fall together.\*

7. Another argument in favour of the Inspiration of the Scriptures may be drawn from some of the *peculiarities observable in their language*. What *fulness* there is in it. The saying of Owen is indeed true : “ We may have *much* truth and power out of a word ; sometimes *enough* ; but never *all* that is in it.” From the earliest times in which a written reve-

Peculiarities of  
language.

\* “ So admirably has this sort of evidence been contrived by the wisdom of God, that in proportion as the lapse of ages might *seem* to weaken the argument derived from miracles long since performed, that very lapse serves only to strengthen the argument derived from the completion of prophecy. If the books of the Old and New Testaments be genuine and authentic, the very numerous predictions which they contain must necessarily be divine. For they are a regular chain, extending almost from the beginning to the end of time : and many of them relate to events so distant, so contingent, and so apparently improbable, that no human foresight could ever anticipate them.”—*Horne*, vol. i. p. 315.



lation was given to man down to the present day, the statements of Scripture have been the subject of exhortations, commentaries, sermons, and expositions. Yet who can venture to say that he, or any one, has exhausted the fulness of the Bible? Fresh trains of thought, new flashes of light, are constantly presenting themselves to those whose minds and hearts are occupied with meditating on the contents of this book. Again, what *freshness* there is in the pages, in the words, of Scripture. Let a love for them once be kindled, a taste for them once acquired, they never pall, they never lose their hold. Over and over again they come with all their old charms—yes, and with new ones,—to the reader's heart. Who ever tires of the sunshine, or the sweet breeze, or the rolling sea, or the green of the fields and trees? They are always fresh to the natural sense. So is the Bible to the spiritual sense. Again, how *different* is the language of the Bible from that of any other book. Take even those writings which were composed in the ages nearest to those of the writers whom we consider sacred. Compare the Apocrypha with the Old Testament Scriptures; the earliest Fathers with the Scriptures of the New

Testament. What a difference of expression, of character,—what an indescribable difference can be perceived. The superiority of the books of Scripture is uncontested, and incontestible; and as Hooker observes of the sacred writers, “A greater difference there seemeth not to be between the manner of their knowledge, than there is between the manner of their speech and others.” To the same effect Neander observes: “In other cases, transitions are wont to form themselves by degrees; but in this instance we observe a sudden change to take place. There are here no gentle gradations, but all at once *a bound* from one style of language to another; which remark may lead us to an acknowledgment of the special activity, in the souls of the Apostles, of the divine Spirit.” \* Again, how

\* See Lee, page 50, and Note.

“We would remark the verisimilitude that sits on the canonical Scriptures, and constitutes a *prima facie* distinction between them, and all the other religious compositions of the age and country in which they were written—we mean their freedom from a certain legendary character, and a certain untasteful extravagance, that is more or less to be detected in the Apocrypha; but which we think is most noticeable of all, when we make the transition from the Scriptures of the New Testament to the very earliest of the uncanonical writers on the side of Christianity.....And the contrast is not confined to particular passages; for throughout and in general character, there is an obvious and sustained dissimilarity—a sense and a dignity and an appropriateness in the one; and in the

remarkable is the *absence* of what we call "*feeling*" in the narratives of the Scriptures, especially of the Evangelists. Though the writers (where we get glimpses into their characters) were evidently full of tender and kindly feelings, yet in their narratives they do not stop to remark on what they narrate in the way that human sentiment would naturally express itself. How briefly is the sum of the birth, the ministry, the work, the suffering, the death, the resurrection, the

other, save when there is a copious intermixture of Scripture quotation, or when the devoted piety breaks forth into an elevation and an earnestness which overshadows all the accompaniments, there is an extravagance and a weakness and a fanciful style both of illustration and argument, which makes us feel that we have got into the hands of very illiterate or very unpractised authors.....When one compares, either with Clement's Epistle or with the Works of any of the Apostolic Fathers, the Compositions of the Fishermen of Galilee; when one recognises the chaste and graceful propriety of the latter—how pertinent throughout, and as predominant in sense as in sacredness—how free of all that is irrelevant or absurd or inconsequential—how unstained by any gratuitous folly or flight of extravagance—and yet how certain, that, if left to themselves, they would, like their immediate successors in the Church, have betrayed the waywardness of unpractised infancy at that work of authorship, in which they were but infants—one cannot but feel that they wrote under some powerful hold which at once guided and restrained them; and that, in the simplicity and purity and orderly keeping of all the parts in that venerable record, we have an internal evidence of as broad a distinction between the canonical and the uncanonical Scriptures, as either the authority of the Church or the innumerable written testimonies of the Christian Fathers would serve to establish."—*Chalmers*, vol. iv., pp. 427, 428, 431, 432.

ascension of the Lord, all given. We have next to nothing of the first thirty years of His life. No exclamations, nor reflections, nor excuses, nor comments, nor revilings, nor apologies, are introduced to show us what part the writer would take, nor how, as a man, he viewed the matter of his story. "Is it thus that *man* relates a history?" "Is it possible that the natural man should have sustained, without one relapse, one single deviation, a tone of feeling so much beyond man? Could the circumstances of those writers, overpoweringly impressive though they were, have secured them against even an occasional betrayal of wonder, of pity, of indignation, or of sorrow? The more we reflect on the nature of the scenes they describe, the more forcibly will the question be suggested:—Must not such emotions have arisen, on some occasions at least, in the breast even of men so circumstanced—men who were still of like passions with ourselves? That the expression of such feelings should nowhere appear throughout the narratives of each and of all, does certainly seem inexplicable; unless we admit a miraculous control of their authorship,—unless we suppose them, in short, to have been, not merely

workers and witnesses of miracles, but miraculously guided in their writings." \*

These peculiarities are full of weight, when calmly considered, as evidence of the supervision and control exercised by a divine power over the human agent.

The Scriptures  
claim inspi-  
ration.

8. It should not be overlooked, among the evidences adduced, that there is a constant *claim made by the Scriptures themselves to Inspiration*. Many are ready to admit that the Bible is the best of books. Even of those who refuse to grant its divine character, many admire its morality, its sublime descriptions of the Deity, its exquisite portraiture of Jesus Christ. They feel and confess that in these respects it is superior to any other compositions in the world. Now this book is constantly referring to itself in its different parts as inspired: i.e., the men who have put on record such pure morality, such grand ideas, such instructive representations, are constantly claiming to be under the guidance of the Holy Ghost. "Moses wrote by the commandment of the Lord." "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue." "The Holy Ghost spake

Nam. xxxiii. 2.

2 Sam. xxiii. 2.

\* Bishop Hinds, quoted in Lee, page 249, Note.

by Esaias the prophet." "Jeremiah the prophet Acts xxviii. 25.  
 spake from the mouth of the Lord." "Holy 2 Chron. xxxvi. 12.  
 men of God spake as they were moved by the  
 Holy Ghost." "What saith the Scripture?" 2 Pet. i. 21. Gal. iv. 30.  
 "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were  
 written for our learning, that we through patience  
 and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Rom. xv. 4.  
 "I testify unto every man that heareth the  
 words of the prophecy of this book, If any man  
 shall add unto these things, God shall add unto  
 him the plagues that are written in this book :  
 and if any man shall take away from the words  
 of the book of this prophecy, God shall take  
 away his part out of the book of life, and out  
 of the holy city, and out of the things which  
 are written in this book." Such are some of Rev. xxii. 18, 19  
 the passages which can be quoted, as illustrating  
 the claim which the Scriptures themselves make  
 to inspired authority.

Here, however, this branch of proof will not  
 be further enlarged upon ; since in the following  
 chapter, one view of it will be presented in  
 detail. But it will be well to notice somewhat  
 fully one passage for the sake of making a few  
 remarks upon it. In 2 Tim. iii. 16, we read,  
 "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God,

and is profitable," &c. Some commentators argue and assert that the English version is faulty in the rendering of the passage, (πᾶσα γραφή θεόπνευστος καὶ ὠφέλιμος), which, they say, ought to be translated, "All, or every, inspired Scripture is also profitable." It is by no means easy to decide which of these two renderings is the correct one. Authorities of weight can be mentioned in support of each ; and even some of those who adopt the latter, do so with hesitation. To enter into a critical examination of the passage would be beside the object of this treatise : but, the *critical* opinions being taken as evenly balanced, there are two points on which it is important to touch, and by the consideration of which a right conclusion may be reached. First, it cannot be supposed that the Apostle Paul would use language which might tend to unsettle the reverence in which the Scriptures were held. His object in the passage before us is to exalt the Scriptures : but if we take the latter of the two proposed renderings, is there not a hint that *some* Scripture is *not* inspired ? At any rate, is not this the very conclusion which some now draw from this rendering ? To say that the translation should be, "every *writing*," &c. (in-

stead of *Scripture*), is only trifling with the spirit of the passage, and is, besides, going contrary to the New Testament usage of the word *γραφή*. For—and this is the other point to be noticed—this word, either in the singular or the plural, occurs upwards of fifty times in the New Testament, and always with reference to the Scriptures either in whole or in part: always, moreover, with some ascription of authority to those Scriptures as the Word of God. St. Paul, then, uses a word which, to the readers of his epistle in those times, would convey precisely the idea which is conveyed among ourselves when we speak of the Bible.\* No one thinks of saying, “The inspired Bible:” no one would ordinarily go about with this assertion, “The inspired Bible is a profitable book.” It is enough for any one to say, “The Bible:” or, if needful to allude to its Inspiration, one would speak thus, “The Bible is inspired and is a profitable book.” Looking therefore at the matter from the point of view which these considerations lead us to take, and remembering that criticism cannot decide positively against the English

\* The use of *γραφή* without the article, does not affect this, as the word is virtually a proper name.



version, we may rest satisfied that the Apostle's meaning is correctly conveyed by the words of our authorised translation, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable."

Other heads of  
proof briefly  
considered.

It would not be at all difficult to enlarge, in a similar way to that adopted in the preceding examples, upon other branches of evidence, and to give proof after proof. One can truly say that with this, as with other divine things, the more one thinks the more do trains of thought flash out, as one may watch the summer sky and see bright lightnings play and dart from unexpected points. Arguments for the Inspiration of the Scriptures might be drawn from *the grandeur of the truth* which they contain; from their *converting power*, so great that a single verse has brought the heart to bow before God,—has spoken peace to the troubled soul,—and has changed the whole current of life's tendencies and efforts. *The civilizing, exalting, and purifying effects* of the Bible might be shown as testifying to its divine original; together with "*the universal doctrine of the Church of God*" to the same effect.\* It would, however, be going beyond the limits of this treatise to

\* This last has been passingly noticed at pages 4 and 5.

enter upon every proof. Enough evidence of this kind has been adduced to demand solemn consideration,—and even to warrant the belief that the Bible is what it professes to be, an inspired volume.

Before going on to the consideration of the next branch of evidence, which will be treated at some length, it will be well to make one observation connected with all the different proofs adduced. *They must be looked at together* ; their *united force* must be taken into account. Each by itself would claim to be heard with attention ; but when the joint testimony of these several particulars is brought to bear upon the question of the Inspiration of the Scriptures, there is a mass of evidence which seems to demand a ready verdict in favour of the Bible as the Word of God.\* In no other

Proofs to be  
taken to-  
gether.

\* We may compare the following from Butler, Part II., chap. vii. "The evidence of Christianity will be a long series of things.....of great variety and compass, taking in both the direct, and also the collateral proofs, and making up, all of them together, one argument ; the conviction arising from which kind of proof may be compared to what they call *the effect* in architecture or other works of art ; a result from a great number of things so and so disposed, and taken into one view." "All these things and the several particulars contained under them, require to be distinctly and most thoroughly examined into ; that the weight of each may be judged of, upon such examination, and such conclusion drawn as results from their united force."

matter would corresponding proof be given without carrying conviction to the sincerely inquiring mind.

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## CHAP. V.

### Thoughts on the Connection and Relation between the Old and New Testaments.

IN the previous chapter several heads of proof were noticed, bearing upon the question before us. Another now claims attention ; and it is one full of interest, and of great importance. It will probably come with more influence to the mind, and meet with more implicit submission from the judgment, than any other of the evidences of Inspiration, striking though one feels them all to be.

The present chapter, then, will be devoted to considering somewhat of the relation between the Old and New Testaments as parts of one consenting whole. It will be shown that the continual reference to, and acknowledgement of, the Old Testament in the New, together with the connection between them, and the evident foreshadowing of the New Testament in the Old, is a most

Relation be-  
tween Old  
and New  
Testaments.

striking proof that both are divine : and so, that by this argument also we may conclude that "all Scripture is given by Inspiration of God."

Genuineness  
and authen-  
ticity of New  
Testament.

The standing point from which this argument may start is the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament. By a *genuine* book is meant one which was really written by the person whose name it bears, or, if it be anonymous, at the time and under the circumstances which are asserted of it. By an *authentic* book we understand one which contains true accounts, whose information is correct and trustworthy. A book may be genuine without being authentic ; it may be written by its professed author, yet its contents be fictitious : another book may be authentic without being genuine ; it may relate true things, and yet not bear the name of its real author : another may be neither genuine nor authentic ; it may be a fiction altogether, both as regards the author's name and the contents : another may be both genuine and authentic ; it may be the production of its professed author, and its contents be every way worthy of credit.

To this last class belong the books of the New Testament. The proof of this lies in

another branch of religious enquiry, viz., that of the Evidences of Christianity : but genuineness and authenticity are in themselves so distinct from Inspiration, that it is no begging of the present question to assert them concerning the writings of the New Testament. Here then is the starting point,—that the books of the New Testament were written by their professed authors, and contain credible accounts.

Opening the New Testament, this genuine and authentic record, we find the writers of it, and Him of whom they say so much, even the Lord Jesus Christ, continually referring to the Old Testament in a way and with a reverence most remarkable. Our attention will first be turned to a few instances of the way in which *the writers* allude to the Old Testament, and then, more fully, to the manner in which *Jesus* treated it.

I. As regards the writers of the New Testament.

(1). In the very beginning of the New Testament you are met by a remarkable reference to the Old. The Evangelist Matthew gives the genealogy of Jesus, and traces His descent from Abraham and David. These were the two im-

Matt. i.

portant personages of Jewish history ; the one the founder of the race, the other the founder of the hereditary monarchy. Now, if we rightly consider the Old Testament promises made to Abraham and David, we shall find that Matthew's genealogy was not a mere curious family record, but an instrument by which it might be shown that the promises made by God to Abraham and David were brought down to their resting place in Jesus, who is here set forth as their descendant according to the flesh. It is clearly the object of the Evangelist to exhibit Jesus Christ as the seed of Abraham, as the Messiah, the Son of David. But why should he do this, if the Old Testament, in which the covenant is set forth, is not to be looked upon as the Word of God, which required, and would have, and in this respect did have, its fulfilment in Christ ?

Matt. i. 22.

(2). Going on to the twenty-second verse of this same chapter, we find the Evangelist expressly declaring that the event of the birth of Jesus, with its antecedent and attendant circumstances, was to fulfil that "which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet." Isaiah is alluded to as a holy man of God, speaking as he was moved by the Holy Ghost.

Isaiah vii. 14.

(3). So again, observe Matt. xii. 17. Our Matt. xii. 17. Lord imposed silence on those whom He healed ; and the reason of this is furnished : but it is a reason which would never strike any one naturally. St. Matthew quotes a prophecy of Isaiah as that which found its fulfilment in the Isaiah xlii. 1—4. conduct of the Lord ; and so establishes that prophet as one who, by divine help, uttered predictions which were to have their accomplishment (in a measure, at least,) even in the ordinary actions of the life of Jesus of Nazareth.

(4). To turn to the Gospel of St. Luke. In Luke i. 68. chapter i, 68, the Evangelist gives the Song of Zacharias, on the occasion of the circumcision of his son, John the Baptist. He asserts that Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost ; and so attaches double weight to the words of one who was a holy servant of God. What Zacharias said may therefore be taken as what Luke himself fully believed and desired to publish. Now, by comparing verses 68 and 70, you find that “the Lord God of Israel spake by the mouth of his holy prophets.” A man who is said to be speaking under the influence of the Holy Ghost, declares that the same Spirit had



taught the holy prophets of the Old Testament dispensation.

John xix.  
36, 37.

(5). We may take an example from the Gospel of St. John. In xix. 36, 37, reference is made to the book of Exodus (xii. 46.) and to the prophecy of Zechariah (xii. 10). By what name does the Evangelist call the books to which he refers? "Scripture:" a name, the force and meaning of which has been already pointed out.\* St. John uses the term as referring to some writings evidently of more than ordinary authority, to which he could appeal as a standard publicly acknowledged, when he undertook to prove the divine work and office of Jesus.

John xx. 9.

(6). Again, in the same Gospel, xx. 9, the words occur, "As yet they knew not the Scripture that he must rise again from the dead." Referring to the context, it is as though the Evangelist said, Had they known the Scripture, that authoritative standard, its application, its intent, their minds would have been quietly stayed on Him whose words are written therein; they would not have suffered as they did from doubts, and fears, and disappointment.

\* See page 51.

(7). The Acts of the Apostles will furnish Acts i. 16. another testimony to the divine original of the Old Testament. In chapter i., 16, it is recorded that the Apostle Peter, on a certain occasion, used the words, "this *Scripture* must needs be fulfilled," adding that the particular passage which he quoted was one which had been originally spoken by the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David: i.e., that David, an Old Testament writer, was inspired.

(8). To pass over many allusions of this kind, Hebrews xi. it will be sufficient to notice lastly, under this head, the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. In that chapter, the Apostle goes through the whole of the Old Testament Scriptures, so to speak. He refers to them as of undoubted authority; he builds on their facts; he adduces their statements; he adopts and subscribes to their teaching. And he does all this to establish the great Gospel truth that faith is the justifying principle before God, and the spring of spiritual effort and action.\* Surely such a way of dealing with the Old Testament Scriptures, as these references exhibit, must

\* Compare the end of the tenth chapter with the opening of the eleventh.

make a deep and favourable impression on a fair and unprejudiced mind ; and go far towards establishing the conclusion that those Scriptures are inspired of God.

The way in  
which Jesus  
referred to  
the Old Tes-  
tament.

II. But now to leave the writers of the New Testament and turn to Him of whom the New Testament is intended to witness, Jesus Himself. No one can read the Gospels attentively without observing how continually the Scriptures of the Old Testament appear to have been invested with the most sacred authority by our Lord.

Generally.

John vi. 32, 33 ;  
iii. 14.  
Matt. xii. 40.

Matt. xv. 3—6.

Matt. xv. 7—9.

John v. 39, 46.

(1). A *general* notice of His manner of speaking will illustrate this. He declared that the manna, the brazen serpent, the history of Jonah, were typical of Himself. He referred expressly to the commandment of God which the Scribes and Pharisees made void by tradition ; and quoted from Isaiah's prophecy to establish His opinion of their guilt. He charged those to whom He spoke to "search the Scriptures ;" and declared to the Jews that had they believed Moses, they would have received Him, Jesus, as the Messiah, for that Moses wrote of Him. He told the Sadducees that the secret of their error touching the resurrection was that they were

ignorant of the Scriptures. On one occasion He said, "The Scripture cannot be broken," and called that Scripture "the word of God;" and on another occasion declared, "One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." In His solemn discourse, contained in the close of the synoptic \* Gospels, He spoke of the prophecy of Daniel. And, as with regard to His choice of Judas, so with regard to the end of that unhappy traitor, He put forward the accomplishment of Scripture as a prominent point in both transactions. Thus, generally, through the daily life and conversation of the Lord Jesus, do you find a constant reference to, and acknowledgment of, the Scriptures of the Old Testament as a standard claiming the highest reverence.

Matt. xxii. 29.

John x. 34, 35.

Matt. v. 18.

Matt. xxiv. 15.  
Mark xiii. 14.John xiii. 18;  
vi. 70; xvii.  
12.

(2). The value of this branch of evidence will, however, be more appreciated, if we notice two or three *particular* instances, taken from the sayings of the Lord.

Particular instances.

How remarkable is the case of the temptation. It is well known what was the one single weapon

The temptation.  
Matthew iv.

\* The word "synoptic" is applied to distinguish the first three Gospels from that of St. John; and signifies that Matthew, Mark, and Luke treat, for the most part, of the same incidents in the life of our Lord, and present the same view of Him.

with which Jesus then met and conquered Satan. Now, consider this : Here is the incarnate Son of God, full of divine power and divine wisdom. Yet He meets the archfiend with a reference to the writings of Moses ; and points to those writings as to a restraining force which must keep Him back from yielding to temptation. "It is written," is His word. That which is written is His standing ground. Has, then, this "it is written" no special value ? Is it worth only what Moses could confer by way of value ? If so, why does the hard-pressed enemy take up similar ground ? Why himself cry, "It is written," instead of trying to assert that what is written is of no weight ? Let any one duly reflect upon this circumstance, and he will admit the force of Stier's words : "So long as I can read and think, nothing will move me from the conviction that Christ ascribes an infallibility to the single *ῥέγραπται* ('it is written'), as such, and that because it is a *ῥέγραπται*."

Dent. viii. 3 ;  
vi. 16 ;  
vi. 13.

Vol iii. 195.

At Nazareth.  
Luke iv. 16—21.

Isaiah lxi.

Again, the Evangelist Luke relates a visit of the Lord to Nazareth ; on which occasion Jesus went into the synagogue and preached. He first read out of the prophecy of Isaiah ; and then, having secured the attention of the audience,

proceeded to declare the fulfilment of the particular prophecy in Himself and His work. Upwards of seven hundred years had passed since the words of Isaiah were uttered : Jesus attached the authoritative name of "Scripture" to the words, and declared the Scripture fulfilled. By thus speaking, beside showing the force of evidence resulting from fulfilled prophecy, He rested on words seven hundred years old as His credentials, which He would not have done, had they been merely the words of man ; and thus He held up the Old Testament Scriptures as the voice of God, declaring His will and revealing His purposes.

Once again :—The Herodians, Sadducees, and Pharisees had on a certain day pressed and worried the Lord with captious, conceited, and subtle questions. After putting each set to silence, he completely stopped the mouths of all, as we read in Matt. xxii. 41—46. "Christ presupposes, as what was at that time generally acknowledged by the Scribes, and what He *confirms* by His acknowledgment, that David in the cx. Psalm speaks of his son, the future Christ ; in like manner He takes for granted, as a thing acknowledged, the *divine inspiration* of

Treatment of  
Herodians,  
&c.  
Matthew xxii.

xx. 42.

the Psalm, so that He can build the proof-question upon it." "His ἐν πνεύματι (in Spirit), or, as Mark has it, ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ (by the Holy Ghost), is none other than the "in the Spirit of holiness" in the *Jewish theory of Inspiration*, solemnly acknowledged by Him, and taken for granted as a common *truth* between Him and His enemies, and which, therefore, (although by ignorance it may be reproached as *Jewish*,) must remain also as thoroughly the Christian idea of Inspiration. For it is that of Christ Himself."\* In the Gospel of St. Luke we find the whole book of Psalms invested with this authority of Inspiration. "Here then is the foundation of the doctrine of Inspiration, according to *the* Teacher, whose authority exceeds that of all the Rabbins of that day and all the Doctors of this.....And can we, His disciples, call ourselves Christians, and Christian theologians, if we treat the Old Testament humanly?.....We are called Christians, and so long as in this the name Christ and Christianity yet lives, it points us ever back again to the Old Testament."†

\* Stier, vol. iii., p. 192.

† Stier, as above.

(3). In addition to the instances thus furnished, another important consideration may be adduced from the way in which the Old Testament was acknowledged by the Lord Jesus, not only in His words and teaching, but in the regulation of His life. Many are the recorded occasions on which we find Him bowing to it, and using strong language about its fulfilment in respect of Himself.

Instances of  
the regulation  
of the life of  
Jesus by  
Scripture.

In Luke xxii. there is the record of a very solemn passage in the life of Jesus. The clouds were gathering fast, and were soon to burst. And now that He was speaking some of His last words to His disciples, and preparing them for the worst, He assured them that so it must be : and why ? "*This that is written* must yet be accomplished in me." When the clouds had burst, and the heavy showers of suffering and betrayal had begun to fall on Him, hear how He still spake : "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels ? But how then shall *the Scripture be fulfilled*, that thus it must be ?" And when the last heavy shock of the storm was full upon Him, and, as regards His bodily life, He was about

Betrayal and  
crucifixion.  
Luke xxii.

v. 37.

Matt xxvi. 53,  
54.



to fall before it, still was His feeling and His language the same. "After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, *that the Scripture might be fulfilled*, saith, I thirst..... When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished ; and he bowed his head and gave up the ghost."

John xix. 28,  
30.

Emmaus.

Again : After His resurrection Jesus walked to Emmaus with two of His disciples. The account is given in Luke xxiv. 13—35. These two disciples, in common with the rest, did not as yet believe the fact of the resurrection. What was the rebuke which the Lord gave them ? on what was it grounded ? "O slow of heart to believe *all that the prophets have spoken !* Ought not Christ to have suffered these things ?" And then, "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in *all the Scriptures* the things concerning himself."

vv. 25—27.

Parting inter-  
course.

Similarly, when, in the midst of the company of His disciples, He would explain the past and throw light upon its mysteries, He said, "These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled *which were written* in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, con-

cerning me." And again, "Thus *it is written*, Luke xxiv. 44. and thus it behoved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day."

v. 46.

It is impossible to read these passages without seeing that the whole course of our Lord on earth was referred by Him to the Scriptures of the Old Testament. In them the prediction, the explanation, the law, the benefit, of His sufferings were all set forth. All that He had done, all that He had suffered, was performed and undergone in compliance with them and for their accomplishment. He lived, He died, He rose, according to them. And in expounding them, and applying their authority to His case, He ever used the strongest term to express necessity; *δεῖ, εἰδεῖ*,—"it must needs be so, for the Scripture hath said it."

Nor must we omit to notice one of the last, most gracious, and most important actions of the Lord's earthly life. When giving a parting boon to His disciples, to qualify them for the work of the ministry, that they might go and "preach repentance and remission of sins in his name among all nations," "he opened their understanding, that they might understand the *Scriptures*:" thus giving them a deeper insight

into those "oracles of God," in which was embodied so much important truth concerning the Redeemer and His work of redemption.

The conclusion  
from this.

How striking, then, is the manner in which the Lord Jesus Christ Himself treated the Scriptures of the Old Testament. He appealed to them as prophetic. He quoted them as authoritative. He upheld them as declaratory of God's will and man's duty. He took them as His own rule. It has been also shown how the Apostles, men of good character, men of veracity, men writing as the exponents of God's truth, speak of and refer to the same Scriptures. Unless, then, we are prepared to deny that the Apostles were such men as described,—and unless we are prepared to go yet farther, and deny the truth and the mission of the Lord Jesus Christ,—we can only arrive at one conclusion, and that is, that the Old Testament Scriptures were given by Inspiration of God.\*

\* "We are not afraid to say it: when we hear the Son of God quote the Scriptures, everything is said, in our view, on their divine inspiration,—we need no farther testimony. All the declarations of the Bible are, no doubt, signally divine; but this example of the Saviour of the world has settled the question for us at once. This proof requires neither long nor learned researches; it is grasped by the hand of a child as powerfully as by that of a doctor. Should any doubt, then,

And now, no very elaborate argument is necessary to deduce the Inspiration of the New Testament Scriptures.

Inspiration of  
New Testa-  
ment.

It must be borne in mind that the Old Testament was the introduction to the New. It was the threshold, or the antechamber, of those wide halls of God's grace which are now thrown open in the Gospel of Christ Jesus. Those very Old Testament Scriptures, so witnessed to and confirmed, as we have seen, by the Lord and His Apostles and Evangelists, foretold the dispensation embodied and set forth in the New Testament. Surely then if the root is holy, the branches also are holy: if the bud is formed and set by a heavenly influence, the full blown flower owes its developement to that influence: if the foundation was laid by the hand and counsels of the divine builder, the superstructure owes its rise, its proportions, its fulness, to

From its con-  
nection with  
Old Testa-  
ment:

assail your soul, let it turn to the Lord of lords; let it behold Him in presence of the Scriptures."—*Gausson*, p. 93.

"The Inspiration of Scripture in the gross, rests chiefly on the testimony of Christ and His Apostles. The Inspiration of particular books or portions now in Scripture rests chiefly on the evidence that they belong to the Canon, or in other words, that they were also then in Scripture: for then they must have been included in the sanction given by the founders of the Christian religion to Scripture, and to all Scripture."—*Chalmers*, vol. iv., p. 398.

the same hand and the same counsels : if the Old Testament is inspired, so also is the New Testament. There is the closest possible connection between them. "This divine record, comprising the two great divisions of the Old and New Testaments, presents itself to the acceptance of mankind as one organised whole : as an elaborate structure whose various parts conspire to the attainment of one definite end, the entire edifice being constructed according to one grand design. That one end is the salvation of man ;—that grand design is the economy of redemption." \* The New Testament in fact is the completion of the Scripture. The reception of its different portions originally took place without any outward agreement on the part of those who received them,—as it were, by an inward impulse and teaching,—at the same time and in different places. With scarcely any exceptions, each separate writing of the New Testament was placed on a level with those of the Old, which had hitherto been exclusively regarded as divine. Indeed the New Testament places itself on this level, the level of authority which it has itself ascribed to the Old Testa-

\* Lee, page 13.

ment. Every word of it appears to breathe and express this : so that the special Inspiration of *that which is written* in it can be the only true conclusion.\*

What, then, is the result of this part of our investigation ? This : The Old Testament is quoted and referred to by the Lord, and His Apostles and Evangelists, in such a manner as to leave no doubt as to its being a divine revelation ; the New Testament is but the amplification and completion of the Old, and must therefore, like it, be a divine revelation.

But the Inspiration of the New Testament Scriptures may also be established by another line of argument.

It has been stated that their genuineness and authenticity may be assumed. If this be so,—if these writings be not an imposture, and the writers be not impostors,—then it may be said decidedly that they are inspired.† For the

And also from  
genuineness  
and authen-  
ticity.

\* These remarks are drawn from Lee, p. 48, and Stier, iii. 195, vi. 364.

† “The learned Michaelis, who held such loose principles on Inspiration, himself declares that the Inspiration of the apostolic writings necessarily results from their authenticity. There is no other alternative, says he : if what they relate is true, they are inspired, if they were not inspired, they would

language used in these writings is such as to argue their Inspiration. The things of which they speak are beyond the reach of man's unaided powers ; and about those things they speak with an authority which tells of more than human delivery. Indeed we can apparently come only to this conclusion ; that "they must of necessity speak and write as they were inspired, or be impostors." \*

Further : † The New Testament may be considered inspired, because one does not see how it can be the production of unaided men. If it be of men, then it must be the contrivance either of wicked or good men. But it cannot be (1) *of wicked men* : for then they condemn themselves, by protesting against wickedness in every way and in the most awful language. Could wicked men speak as these writers do, of the holiness, justice, purity of God ? Nor (2) can the New Testament be the contrivance *of good men* : for good men could not, and would

not be sincere ; but they are sincere, therefore they are inspired. There is nothing in such reasoning that can be thought like a begging of the question."—*Gausson*, p. 138.

\* Dr. O. Gregory, quoted in *Horne*, vol. i., p. 230.

† A similar argument is used for the evidences of Christianity.

not, fabricate such an imposture. The fact of their doing so would disprove their goodness. By so bold a fraud, sent forth in the name of God, they would convict themselves of the grossest falsehood.\*

Supposing, therefore, the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament there are good grounds for assuming its Inspiration.

These two lines of argument about the New Conclusion. Testament lead us to the conclusion that it is divine in its origin. We have arrived at a similar conclusion as regards the Old Testament. The result of the whole inquiry may therefore be expressed in the words of St. Paul, "All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God."

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\* See Horne, vol. i., p. 230.



## CHAPTER VI.

### Difficulties and Objections.

Preliminary remarks before noticing objections.

UP to this point we have been occupied with considering some of the direct proofs which can be given for establishing the Inspiration of the Scriptures. It is now necessary to notice some of the difficulties which present themselves, and to investigate some of the objections by which it is endeavoured to set aside the evidence which seems so conclusive in favour of the point. In approaching this part of the subject, the following preliminary remarks require attention.

Objections to be rigidly weighed.

1. *When we have good reason for believing the truth of any system, there is the greater need for strictly weighing any objections against it.* Now, every studious and candid reader must be struck with what has been advanced as to the Inspiration of the Scriptures: with the several heads of evidence given in chapter iv. : and

especially with what has been urged in chapter v., as to the connection between the Old and New Testaments, the deference paid by Jesus to the Old Testament, and the consequent result of the Inspiration of the New Testament. To nullify, or even to impair and shake, such evidence as this, *objections ought to be unanswerable.*

2. *Objections too often spring from preconceived notions being brought to the study of the Scriptures.* "The critics of the Gospels assume at once the position of enemies, and not of inquirers :"—and this may be applied not to the Gospels only, but to all Scripture. Men do not ask,—“Is there good ground for receiving this statement and this doctrine?” but,—“Will they square with my ideas? If not, I shall reject them.” No fair treatment is shown towards the books of the Bible. The most unfavourable reading is often adopted ; small differences are declared to show positive contradictions : a clear idea of the particular writer's object and aim is not obtained, or even sought for. Objectors do not care to compare spiritual things with spiritual, “but strive to petrify the living form” of God's truth “into a rigid mass of stone.” The

Objections  
from precon-  
ceived ideas.

Compare  
Westcott,  
p. 129.

greatest prejudice is evinced ; and some do not hesitate to give credence to what an ordinary historian relates, while they disbelieve the common statements of Matthew or Luke.

Bible to be  
judged by its  
evidence, and  
not by its  
difficulties.

3. This leads to another remark. *The writings of the Bible should be judged not by their internal difficulties, but by the weight of evidence in their favour as a revelation.* The reversal of this statement, the neglect of powerful external evidence, is one of the most fruitful sources of doubt, error, and unbelief ; and that, not only with respect to Inspiration, but as regards Christianity generally. The question is not, Are there such and such difficulties in the matter ? but, Are there sufficient grounds to warrant my receiving this book, the Bible, as the expression of the divine mind and will ? It is a solemn truth that, if good grounds can be shown on which the Bible is to be received as the Word of God, it is the duty of every one to receive it, irrespective of its difficulties.

Objections fre-  
quently made  
and met.

4. *The objections against the Scriptures have been repeated over and over again, and over and over again have they been met.* They are of the earth, they spring from man's heart, and put one in mind of the fabled Antæus, who as often

as he touched the earth sprang up with fresh strength. One might suppose that there is something new in them ; but there is not. Answers to them have been given many times ; yet persons make the objections again, as if there was some fresh discovery breaking on the world, as if each objector had his own peculiar reason for crying, "I have found it." One has well said, that "the repetition of already refuted arguments seems to be a privilege with objectors. Even *echoes of echoes* are to be found among them."\* The greater part therefore of what is so vauntingly put forth is really worth nothing. Objectors have not a well-filled armoury of proved weapons. "The heritage of scepticism is rather the settled spirit of doubt, than the accumulated store of objections."† Nor should it be overlooked that the Scriptures appear to have been accepted by the Christian Church in all ages with full knowledge of the objections urged against them.‡

5. *The true source of all objections may be said to be the impatience and pride of the reason-*

Objections  
spring from  
undue  
reasoning.

\* Dr. Young, quoted in Horne.

† Westcott, p. 131.

‡ See Lee, pp. 237 note, 383.

*ing faculty.* It mistakes its province. It oversteps its bounds. The highest gift which God has made innate in man is perverted ; reason loses its real characteristic,—*it fails to judge about itself* ; and the wisdom of men becomes foolishness.\* We must remember that there *is* a bound to man's comprehension. When the finite is dealing with the Infinite, a limit must be reached, on which is inscribed, "Hitherto shalt thou go, and no further." Man's reason is not only finite, but marred by the fall. What wonder, then, if it is called on to pause and submit ? True reason will teach man where to bow. It is not reason, but pride springing from the want of reason, which keeps the will opposed to law, and the mind at enmity, because

\* "We do not condemn the exercise of reason in matters of theology. It is the part of reason to form its conclusions, when it has data and evidences before it. But it is equally the part of reason to abstain from its conclusions, when these evidences are wanting. Reason can judge of the external evidences for Christianity, because it can discern the merits of human testimony ; and it can perceive the truth or the falsehood of such obvious credentials as the performance of a miracle, or the fulfilment of a prophecy, or the marvellous agreements between the subject matter of revelation and previously or distinctly known truth. But one of the most useful exercises of reason is, to ascertain its limits, and to keep within them ; to abandon the field of conjecture, and to restrain itself within that safe and certain barrier which forms the boundary of human experience."—*Chalmers*, p. 443.

it cannot always and altogether understand. "It is an ancient complaint," writes Owen, with much force and wisdom, "that spiritual things are filled with great obscurity and difficulty ; and it is true. Not that there is any such thing in themselves, for they all come forth from the Father of Lights, and are full of light, order, beauty, and wisdom ; and light and order are the only means whereby anything makes a discovery of itself. But the ground of all darkness and difficulty in these things lies in ourselves. We can more clearly and steadily see and behold the moon and stars than we can the sun, when it shines in its greatest lustre. It is not because there is more light in the moon and stars than in the sun, but because the light of the sun is greater than our visive faculty can bear and behold. So we can more clearly discover the truth and distinct nature of things moral and natural than we can of things heavenly and spiritual. Not that there is more substance or reality in them, but because the ability of our understanding is more suited unto the comprehension of them : the others are above us. We know but in part, and our minds are liable to be hindered and disordered

in their apprehension of things heavenly and spiritual, by ignorance, temptations, and prejudices of all sorts." \* These remarks apply with all their force to the difficulties and objections urged against the Inspiration of the Scriptures.

Difficulties to  
be expected.

6. It may be added that *difficulties in the Bible should not interfere with our reception of it as the Word of God.* Considered as His Word, it is to be looked upon, in a sense, as the grandest of His works : for He has magnified His Word above all His Name.† But are the works of God to be free from all difficulties when submitted to the judgment of man ? Are there no difficulties in the material world around us ? "Origen has with singular sagacity observed, that 'he who believes the Scripture to have proceeded from Him who is the Author of Nature, may well expect to find the same sort of difficulties in it, as are found in the constitution of Nature.' And in a like way of reflection it may be added, that he who denies the Scripture to have been from God upon account of these difficulties, may, for the very same reason, deny the

\* Owen, vol. vii., p. 285.

† Psalm cxxxviii. 2.

world to have been formed by Him."\* Upon the supposition of a revelation being granted,—and it has been shown that this is both possible and probable,†—it is highly credible beforehand that we should be incompetent judges of it to a great degree, and that it would contain many things appearing to us liable to great objections. For we cannot know beforehand what degree of information, either natural or revealed, God would require, or enable, those persons to use who were commissioned by Him to publish His will. So that the great question for us to consider, as regards the authority of the Scriptures, is whether they are what they claim to be ; not whether they are a book of such kind, and put forth in such a way and shape, as men think a book containing a divine revelation should be. Neither obscurities, therefore, nor inaccuracies, nor seeming contradictions, nor other such things, can overthrow the fact of the Inspiration of the Scriptures, unless it can be proved that there *ought* to be no difficulties in the works of God when presented to finite minds, and that this, one of His greatest works, the Bible,

\* Butler, Introduction.

† See, pp. 7—11.



should be readily scanned in all respects by the reason of man.\*

Objections  
considered.

From these remarks we may pass to notice some difficulties and objections in detail.

Inspiration of  
historical  
parts.

1. Difficulty is felt as regards the Inspiration of the Historical Books of the Bible. One can see, it is said, that in a *prophecy* divine assistance was required, and also in statements of *doctrine* and *spiritual truth* : but was the same degree of Inspiration needed in the case of *history* ? Indeed, was Inspiration necessary at all to enable a writer to compile a record of facts with which he was acquainted, or which he might easily learn from others ?

Importance of  
distinguish-  
ing between  
Inspiration  
and Revela-  
tion.

This difficulty seems to arise in the main from not distinguishing between Inspiration and Revelation. The two are essentially distinct, though commonly confounded. *Revelation* is the imparting of truth and knowledge in a supernatural way : or the term may be applied to the whole matter thus made known. *Inspiration* is the influence or energy brought to bear on certain persons to fit them for communicating certain matters. Everything communicated by

\* This is an outline of the reasoning in Butler, Part II., chapter iii.

an inspired person need not be revealed.\* There is, then, no higher value, as far as Inspiration alone is concerned, in an inspired prophecy, or an inspired statement of doctrine, than in an inspired history. The point is this: The Holy Spirit, in His oversight of the Church of God, foresaw that certain records, certain statements, certain prophecies, would form a volume of standing benefit to the Church. He moved and instructed, by His Inspiration, certain persons to write those records, statements, and prophecies. They all, as to Inspiration, stand upon

\* The following extract illustrates the distinction: although it is not necessary to limit *revelation* to "things of God and heaven." *Ordinary* matters, unknown to an individual, may be revealed. "The terms 'Inspiration' and 'Revelation' have been confounded; but in meaning they are really distinct from each other. A man might be inspired for the purpose of writing a history with selection and undeviating accuracy—yet with all the facts of which he was previously acquainted; and this would be Inspiration without Revelation. Or a man might be informed by a celestial visitant, of matters known only to celestials, as one of the Apostles by Jesus Christ, and may afterwards, in the natural exercise of memory and composition, commit the doctrines to writing; and this would be Revelation without Inspiration. The one does not necessarily imply the other. When a superhuman, but yet visible being, as our Saviour in the flesh, tells His disciples what before were unknown things of God and heaven; this is Revelation. I would even call it Revelation, when an invisible being, as the Holy Spirit, infuses the knowledge of these things into the minds of men. But when under His guidance, and by His suggestion, they are prompted to speak and write of them to others, this is Inspiration."—*Chalmers*, vol. iv., p. 365.

one footing : they all make up the Bible. What concerns us is not that any writer was acquainted with this or that particular fact, or that he might have learned it from ordinary intercourse with his fellow-men : but that the superintending Spirit saw fit to preserve that fact for the perpetual instruction and benefit of the Church of Christ, and has preserved it by giving it a place in the inspired pages of the Bible.\*

Historical  
parts referred  
to by our  
Lord.

Matt. xxiv. 38.

[Gen vii.]

Luke xvii. 29—

32. [Gen. xix.]

Mark xii. 26.

[Exod. iii. 6.]

John iii. 14.

[Num. xxi. 9.]

John vi. 32.

[Ex. xvi. 15.]

Matt. xii. 3,

40—42.

[1 Sam. xxi. 6.

2 Chr. ix. 1.

Jonah i. 17;

iii. 5.]

With respect to the historical books of the Old Testament it should be observed how constantly they were referred to by the Lord Jesus. His allusions to Noah and Lot, to the burning bush, to the brazen serpent, to the manna, to the visit of David to the priest when he ate the shew-bread, to the queen of Sheba, to Jonah, —these all go to show that the historical parts of the Old Testament are so bound up with the truth of God, so illustrative of His dealings, so declaratory of His mind, that we cannot sever them from the rest of the Scriptures whose claim to Inspiration some might be more ready to admit. Indeed it would seem as though this habitual allusion, on the part of Jesus, to the

\* For some valuable remarks on the Inspiration of history, see Chalmers, vol. iv., pp. 381 and following.

historical parts of the Old Testament was intended, in His divine foresight, as a ground of argument in favour of their Inspiration.\*

2. Another difficulty which presents itself to some minds may be thus stated. "Inaccuracies and mistakes are made by persons of whom the Scriptures assert that they spoke under divine influence: nay more, immoral actions, and conduct unbecoming the character of God, are ascribed to persons said to be under that influence." Inaccuracies, immoralities, &c.

This difficulty will not stand if we bear in mind that the Inspiration *of a writer* is a matter quite distinct from the Inspiration of any *person about whom he writes*. What if Stephen's chronology can be proved to be not quite correct? Inspiration of writer, and that of person written about, distinct. Acts vii. How does this affect the Inspiration of St. Luke, whom the Holy Spirit employed to preserve Stephen's address? What if Samson's moral conduct was clearly wrong in several instances? Judges xvi.

\* It is important to notice what is thus expressed by Professor Lee, though in a different connection to that which is immediately before us. "Israel, in all its institutions, as well as in its external history, is one grand prophecy of the future. Take, e.g., the seventy-eighth Psalm, in which the entire history of the chosen people is specially particularised, and expounded in a spiritual manner. The New Testament (1 Cor. x.) informs us how St. Paul understood this Psalm, and applied it to Christ."—Page 164, Note.

How does this interfere with the Inspiration of the writer of the Book of Judges, whose business was to transmit a certain record to subsequent ages of the Church? \* In considering Bible-history we must not forget that it *is* history. Transactions are chronicled as they took place, without comment. Facts are given, and no remarks, either of praise or blame, are made. Speeches are recorded, without the writer's at all committing himself to the opinions expressed or the sentiments uttered. But surely, the fact that a certain person, said to be good and wise and holy, on a particular occasion acted or spoke in apparent contradiction to goodness, wisdom, and holiness,—this fact does not involve the non-inspiration of him who records it. To say so would be to confound things essentially distinct. And, indeed, it may be urged that the impartiality and truth shown in recording evil as well as good, and in giving plain and unamended statements, goes some way in favour of Inspiration, other circumstances being taken into account.

\* It will be borne in mind that the object of this treatise is to establish the Inspiration of *the Scriptures*, not to prove that of any individual mentioned in them. Reference may be made, in connection with this latter point, to Butler, Part II. ch. iii.

3. It is further objected that the Bible statements are at variance with scientific discoveries and facts. Geology, astronomy, ethnological and physiological deductions are declared to be decided in their opposition to the teaching of the Scriptures, which, therefore, from facts within our reach, are shown to be untrue and so uninspired.

Bible at variance with science.

The reply to this objection embraces more points than one. First it is to be recollected that the object of the Bible is *but one* in the main ; viz., to deliver, in connection with religious truth, such teaching as would lead man to discoveries beyond his unaided power. But as regards science, its results are produced by man's study and investigation. These results therefore do not come within the scope of revelation. So that a strictly scientific accuracy of language is not to be expected from those who wrote on a subject which would call for no direct expression of scientific truth. But, beside this, can there be such a decided contradiction as some assert that there is, when eminent scientific men have loved and prized the Bible ? It is well known that some of the most advanced men in the range of science have been holy men of

But, scientific accuracy not to be looked for.

Have not scientific men prized the Scriptures ?

*Are there con-  
tradictions?*

God, that they have known Him as a Father, a Saviour, a Sanctifier. Were they hypocrites or fools in this? or were they traitors to the cause of science to whose advancement their studies were devoted? Who will say this? Who *can* say it with any truth? Again: is it certain and undeniable that any portion of the Scriptures contradicts scientific discovery? Too often the persons who say so fight with other men's weapons and make their assertions second-hand. "The advances of science have in so many instances confirmed, in the most striking manner, the revelation of the Scriptures, that one is certainly disposed to be very doubtful as to the truth of any such contradiction, unless it is clearly proved."\* "No one truth can be contradictory to any other truth. The question which we must settle in the first instance, and on its own peculiar evidence, is,—Does the Bible come from God? And if it be divine (and therefore true), then it is certain, demonstrably certain, that no fact in the universe,—in heaven above or earth beneath, or in the waters or the rocks under the earth,—can by possibility be really inconsistent with it." The

\* Hervey, p. 54.

quotation is from Professor Lee ; who adds in his notes two passages from Professor Whewell's *Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences*, from which the following sentences are taken. "In the sciences which trace the progress of natural occurrences, we can in no case go back to an origin, but in every instance appear to find ourselves separated from it by a state of things, and an order of events, of a kind altogether different from those which come under our experience. The thread of induction respecting the natural course of the world snaps in our fingers, when we try to ascertain where its beginning is. Since, then, science can teach us nothing positive respecting the beginning of things, she can neither contradict nor confirm what is taught by Scripture on that subject."\* It is easy, then, for some to say that there are contradictions ; but while others, equally patient and learned in investigation, arrive at a different conclusion, and declare that there is no contradiction, but that scientific discoveries either confirm, or do not and cannot interfere with, Scripture assertions, we may at least say that the matter is

\* Lee, p. 418.



before the judge, and decline to admit the force of the objection.

Historical in-  
accuracy.

4. It is further stated against the Inspiration of the Scriptures that they want historical accuracy. Their statements are contrary to those of profane history, and cannot therefore be of a divine character.

But, Scripture  
history con-  
firmed by pro-  
fane records.

This is a charge which has been commonly made, in an unfair and prejudiced spirit, against the Bible. So far, however, from its being true, the statements of the Bible in its historical parts have been most remarkably strengthened by the discovery of the records of those times and places to which it alludes. It refers to the most remote times, and touches upon the history of all the nations which were in any way connected with the Jews ; and its accuracy is being continually brought to light. Listen to the voice of Nineveh, long silent beneath the city's ruins, but speaking now in testimony of the truth of Bible records of transactions between Israel and Assyria. How striking, too, is the way in which it has been proved that Daniel is correct in his account of Belshazzar's death when Darius took the kingdom of the Chaldeans. Profane history gives Nabonnedus as the last of the Chaldean

Dan. v. 30.

kings, and tells us that when Cyrus took the city of Borsippus, he spared Nabonnedus and treated him kindly. Daniel's account was, of course, considered not trustworthy ; but in 1854 Col. Rawlinson discovered in Mesopotamia some cylinders, the records of which disclosed that the eldest son of Nabonnedus (the last king of Chaldea) was named Bel-shar-ezar, and that he was admitted to share the government by his father. So that now it can be seen how Bel-shazzar (or Bel-shar-ezar) as joint-king might be holding court at Babylon, and have perished in the attack which was made on that city, while Nabonnedus, his father, might have been spared as profane history says that he was.\* With such instances as these before us, we may safely say that, as regards historical accuracy, there is a strong presumption in favour of the Scriptures, and that such incorrectness as would affect their value has not been established. Nay, it is well known that examples of the most striking historical observation and accuracy can be given ; for instance, from the writings of St. Luke.†

\* Lee, p. 388, who refers to the *Athenæum*, March 18, 1854.

† In remarking on the unfairness with which this charge of historical inaccuracy is pressed against the Bible, Professor

Miracles.

5. Objectors farther urge that the Inspiration of the Scriptures is out of the question, since they contain contradictions to probability, viz., miracles.

Are miracles  
improbable?

This objection is, perhaps, not so common as it used to be : but it will be well to bestow some little consideration upon it. At the outset we may ask, Where is the improbability in a miracle ? God has a purpose to be subserved by the settled order of things around us. Is it *improbable* that He should have other purposes, and those of a different kind ? If He has, is it *improbable* that the interruption for a time of the settled order of things should be the means of accomplishing those purposes ? Then, is it *improbable* that He should thus interrupt, or unsettle, the ordinary aspect of things ? If

Lee says : "Should any statement of the Old or of the New Testament seem to be at variance with that of an uninspired historian, it is taken for granted, without farther inquiry, that the sacred narrative is false. Every presumption in favour of the uninspired writer is brought prominently forward ; nor are his statements, as to matters of fact unnoticed by others, thought to require corroboration : while the assertions of a Prophet, or of an Evangelist, if similarly unsupported, is immediately subjected to an unscrupulous or prejudiced criticism. This is a species of unfairness to which the Bible, above all other books, affords an opportunity :—for it is remarkable with what uniformity the sacred writers abstain from directly touching upon topics of common history, except in cases where their narrative absolutely requires it."—p. 399.

miracles do not aid in fraud, if they do not contradict clear laws of the divine perfection and goodness, where is the improbability of them? It is quite beyond the ability of man to decide as to what is probable or improbable within the range of God's all-seeing mind and all-compassing intentions. Miracles are certainly *possible* with God. And, while we cannot go so far as to say that every possible thing with God is also probable, we can say that nothing possible with Him is improbable: for we know so little of His ways that we cannot judge in the matter.

Beside this, however, the objection is to be met by the question, Has the Bible external evidence in its favour independent of miracles? Yes, it has. Then, its narration of miracles must be received as part of its truth. The Bible is a whole. Its morality and its miracles go together. The high standing of the law given by Moses, and the pure far-reaching ethics of Jesus, are bound up in one bundle with the miracles which accompanied their publication. If you choose one you must take both: if you reject the miracles, you may as well refuse the claims of the morals. And so indeed it has too often been, as might be shown by referring to

Miracles an essential part of Bible narration. The Bible to be judged independently of miracles.

the lives and writings of some of the leading objectors to miracles and the Scriptures which relate them.\*

Internal con-  
tradictions.

6. To notice another difficulty which offends many : Internal contradictions abound. The sacred writers are at variance with each other. Where then is their Inspiration ?

Do they really  
exist ?

It is being continually, almost daily, shown that many of these so called differences and contradictions do not really exist. They vanish before examination, and before discoveries made in the course of time. Or they are *variations in representation*, not contradictions in matter of fact. When persons of different feelings are describing the same event, will there not be differences of expression ? But will this destroy the truth of their statements ? Unhappily

If so, their  
nature.

\* Perhaps no miracle has been more attacked than that recorded in Joshua x., by which the sun and moon stood still. Scientific objections have been made to the language, as well as objections more directly levelled against the miracle. As to the former, no candid mind can refuse to admit the assertion that *popular language* alone could be used in describing the effect produced ; and that to have spoken in scientific terms would only have been to darken the subject and perplex the minds of most readers. As to the miracle itself, we must receive it as part of the inspired record, according to the principle stated above. Explanations of the way in which it happened are no more required here than in the case of any other miracle. Who need—who can—explain the phenomenon ?

the opponents of Inspiration are too prone to magnify differences of representation into contradictions, and perpetuate an objection which candour would have silenced long ago. These diversities, moreover, which are objected against often consist in statements of numbers and quantity. But how readily may an error have crept in when copies of the Scriptures were multiplied by the pen : more particularly when it is remembered that in the Hebrew there were no *figures*, such as we use, but that *letters* of the alphabet expressed numbers. Many of these letters were very much alike, and the substitution of one for another might increase or diminish a number considerably. Now, differences in numerical statements, in names, in dates, are very distinct things from differences and contradictions on points of doctrine and moral practice. These latter are not found : the former are found in some instances, to be accounted for as stated above. And when we consider the great antiquity of some of the writings of the Bible, and the numerous copies made of them, the wonder is that so few differences are found in trifling details.\* Nor must

\* As regards the differences of the Scriptures the following

it be forgotten that the question of *God's preserving* PERFECT accuracy in the books of the Bible in every respect, is quite distinct from the question of *His having originally inspired* those books.

The right view  
of many differ-  
ences.

Again: many differences which are brought forward as making *against* the Inspiration of Scripture do in fact make *for* it, if rightly understood. This is the case with the differences of detail and circumstances in the four Gospels. What may we gather from the fact that we have four Gospels? May we not conclude that there is a fourfold view presented to us of our Lord? Assuredly the reason cannot only be that we may have a little more in one Gospel than in another. Therefore in employing

The object of a  
fourfold Gos-  
pel.

extracts are interesting. "Nothing has been discovered, not even a single reading, that could throw doubt on any of the passages before considered as certain. All those who differ, almost without exception, leave untouched the essential idea of each phrase, and bear only on points of secondary importance; such as the insertion or the omission of an article or a conjunction, the position of an adjective before or after its substantive, the greater or less exactness of a grammatical construction."—*Gaussen*, p. 170. "In the Hebrew Manuscripts that have been examined, some 800,000 various readings actually occur as to the Hebrew consonants. How many as to the vowels, points, and accents, no man knows. But at the same time it is equally true that all these taken together do not change or materially affect any important point of doctrine, precept, or even history."—*M. Stuart*, quoted in *Lee*, p. 420, Note.

each Evangelist, the Holy Spirit would have a special purpose ; viz., to present the same character to the readers in a particular light. Matthew has his mind occupied with Jesus as the Messiah, the descendant of David : Mark shows Him to us full of action and energy : Luke's Gospel dwells continually on Jesus as the Saviour in perfect human nature, full of mercy, sympathy, tenderness : John unfolds the deep mysteries of His words, and fills up with discourse what the others had sketched out in miracle, parable, and action. What wonder, then, if there is a difference in some respects ? And yet how many meeting points ! How many proofs of one leading purpose, such as those writers could never have secretly concocted ! How many marks of a superintending intelligence, whose end was to bless the world with such a representation of its Redeemer, as should meet every want and answer every requirement ! \*

\* "We do not commonly attend to the peculiar narrations, or the distinctive arrangement of each Evangelist : we do not regard their characters, nor the circumstances of the believers for whom they wrote : we see differences of order, and neglect to notice variation of purpose : we mark the divergencies of the lines of history, and yet do not trace them back to their common centre. Still the mere existence of a quadriform



Instances of ap-  
parent, but  
not real, con-  
tradictions.

It may be useful to give one or two examples of apparent contradictions, which are not really such. We find, according to one account of the crucifixion, that both the thieves reviled our Lord ; according to another, that one of them turned to Him in prayer. But the two accounts are easily reconciled. At first both did revile Jesus ; but subsequently one was softened and brought to repentance, and then cried for mercy to the dying Saviour. Again : On the occasion of Peter denying his Lord the second time, we read in St. Matthew's and St. Mark's accounts that it was a maid, in St. Luke's that it was a

Matt. xxvii. 44.  
Luke xxiii.  
40—42.

Matt. xxvi. 71.  
Mark xiv. 69.

Luke xxii. 58.

Gospel from the earliest ages in the Church, as the sole depository of Christian history, and the peculiar storehouse of Christian example, should lead us to suspect that each part performs some special work ;—that the fulness of the subject, the peculiar wants of primitive Christianity, and the different phases of the human mind in every age, required more than one historian of the new creation of the world. At least this multiformity of narrations, ushered in with a noble array of outward proofs and recognised by every Church of God, imposes on us the duty of a patient inquiry, if haply we may find 'the agreement of their variation,' and so lay open new materials for thoughtfulness and gratitude, while we enlarge our sense of the fulness and mystery of Holy Scripture."—*Westcott*, p. 26.

"We must ever remember that our four Evangelists regarded the facts of the Saviour's history each under a different aspect. The essential point of difference between St. John and the others lies in his having in view the opponents of the Gospel within the Church ; while the Synoptical Writers mainly addressed themselves to the wants of those who stood without its pale, whether Jews or Gentiles."—*Lee*, p. 393.

man, who put the question to him. St. John, who was an eyewitness, clears the difficulty by saying that *several* persons questioned him at the same time, thus establishing the truth of each of the other statements. Again : The words of the superscription on the cross vary in each Gospel ; but every one of the Evangelists gives the expression, "The King of the Jews." This was the important part of the sentence, showing who the sufferer really was : this, therefore, the Holy Spirit has preserved. These instances may serve to show that variations are not contradictions ; that truth can be looked at from different points of view, and that, when so looked at, it will necessarily present different features. Indeed when it is remembered how well the writers of the Gospel must have been acquainted with the matters which they recorded, and how readily the captious Jews would have laid hold upon any contradictions, is it likely—waving for a moment the Holy Spirit's influence—that they would have contradicted each other?

7. It has been farther objected against the plenary Inspiration of the Scriptures that passages are found in which that very Inspiration

John xviii. 25.

Matt. xxviii. 37.  
Mark xv. 26.  
Luke xxiii. 38.  
John xix. 19.

Are contradictions likely?

"Some passages disclaim Inspiration."

1 Cor. vii.

is disclaimed : and, particularly, some expressions in the seventh chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians are brought forward, as proving that St. Paul did not consider himself to be under the direction of the Spirit when he used them. "To the rest," he says, "speak I, not the Lord : " and again, "I have no commandment of the Lord ; yet I give my judgment."

Verse 12.

Verse 25.

But mark the context.

An examination of the context throughout the chapter will be sufficient to show that there is no good foundation for this objection. The Apostle is giving instruction to the Corinthians on two points, more especially : the duty of married persons towards each other, and the best rule to be observed in particular cases concerning unmarried women. While treating the first point, he declares that the wife is not to depart from her husband, and adds that not only is this his sentence as an Apostle, but that there is *an express commandment of the Lord Jesus* bearing on the matter.\* "Unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord." Then, farther in connection with this same point, the Apostle looks at another view of the subject.

Verse 10.

\* In Mark x. we find the positive declaration of the Lord, confirming the original appointment of God.

Dealing with the case in which one of a married couple might be a believer while the other continued in unbelief, he charged them not to separate on that account: and speaks *not in the words of any express commandment uttered by the Lord*, but in his own apostolic words. "To the rest speak I, not the Lord." We shall see soon what 1 Cor. vii. 12. weight his apostolic words have. So, as regards the other case, that of the marriage of virgins. "I have no commandment," he says, "of the Lord;" there is *no expressed decision* of Jesus Verse 25. on the subject to which I can refer, as I can to that on the subject of separation: "but I give my judgment" for your safe guidance in the matter.

Now, does any one ask, What is the value of the Apostle's decision and judgment? Read the last words of the chapter: "I think also that I have the Spirit of God." This is but Verse 40. another way of putting what he says in another place; "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." Clearly, then, so far xiv. 37. from disclaiming Inspiration, St. Paul asserts his Inspiration most distinctly. The fact is that

there is no contrast intended, in the passages referred to, between Inspiration and non-Inspiration ; but between the expressed command of the Lord Jesus Christ and the subsequent inspired judgment of His Apostle. The chapter but affords an illustration of the words of our Lord : “ I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.”

John xvi. 12, 13.

Trivial matters.

8. One more difficulty may be named before closing this notice of objections. There are certain, so-called, trivialities found in the Scripture ; matters of very ordinary importance : how was Inspiration necessary in connection with them ?—for example, St. Paul’s sending greetings to his friends ; his recommending Timothy to drink wine ; his telling Timothy to bring his cloak.

No expressions  
to be taken  
alone ; but as  
parts of a  
whole.

If these directions of the Apostle stood alone, the question as to their Inspiration might not be without its force. But the Bible must be treated as a whole. Who is to sever one part from another ? Who is to be the judge where Inspiration stops, and ordinary mental exercise begins ? What seems to me to require Inspi-

ration may not so seem to you : what you look upon as calling for divine assistance may not be so regarded by another. In the world around us creatures the most insignificant in our eyes perform a part, and by performing it, glorify God. The smallest or the most repulsive insect is as much God's work as the most comely and the most intellectual of men. Why should there not be a correspondence between the Word of God and His material creation? What if a greeting brings out some exquisite points of Christian character and standing ; as is so conspicuously the case in the sixteenth chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans? What if the Apostle's advice to Timothy about wine shows that health is a gift of God to be cared for on His account? What if Paul's need of his cloak helps to illustrate the "painfulness" and "cold and nakedness" which for the name of Jesus, and for the elect's sake, he was ready to undergo? Surely such illustrations are not beneath the dignity and wisdom of the Holy Spirit. He does, indeed, teach us *directly* ; but it is part of His plan to teach us *indirectly* also.

The difficulties and objections which have been enumerated may be taken as comprehend-

Analogy in  
creation.

2 Cor. xi. 27.  
Phil. i. 20.  
2 Tim. ii. 10.

Candour  
required; but  
too often  
wanting.

ing all which appear to have any weight. It has been seen how they can be met and explained: and it must be evident how insufficient they are to shake the mass of proof in favour of Inspiration *when the mind candidly surveys the whole question*. Unfortunately this candour is too often lacking. Some will give up any part of the Bible at the first appearance of difficulty. Others profess that they "cannot bring themselves to believe" such and such things. Others again even refuse to receive the testimony of literary discovery in favour of Scripture. Others seem to pride themselves in ignorance of that truth so well expressed by Lord Bacon; "A little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism: but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion." Such persons are unsatisfied, not because there are no sufficient grounds for their satisfaction, but because they themselves are not ready to be satisfied. Doubts are easy things, easily raised, plausibly maintained. God has mercifully forewarned us against them, when He bids us receive with *meekness* the engrafted Word.

James i. 21.

Difficulties may  
be useful.

But what then: Are there no difficulties?  
Yes: enough to keep us humble, enough to try

our faith, enough to carry out the resemblance between the Bible and the other works of God. But when we recollect what light has been thrown on many difficulties by study, observation, and discovery, and that our ignorance of some perhaps very small circumstance well-known to the writers of the Scriptures, may be the cause of this or that difficulty, it is more candid, more reasonable, more truly wise, to wait, and to yield to the preponderance of proof in favour of the Inspiration of the Bible.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### Recapitulation.

#### Practical Results of the Subject.

THE preceding chapters will have served to put the question of the Inspiration of the Scriptures in such a light before the reader's mind, as will enable him, it is hoped, to form a sufficiently correct opinion on the subject. The nature and limits of this treatise prevent a deeper and more extensive enquiry : but one end has ever been kept in view, to omit nothing which might contribute to making this a book for popular reading, and a useful introduction to a more particular investigation of the subject, on the part of those who may be able and inclined to go farther. The concluding pages may very fitly be occupied with recapitulating briefly what has been advanced, and with pointing out some important practical bearings which such

a study as that before us should exercise upon the student's mind and heart.

Our investigation opened with the enquiry, Recapitulation.  
Have we any record to which we may apply the words of the Lord Jesus, "Thy Word is truth?" The Bible appeared as a claimant—the claimant—for this distinction; and the important necessity was shown of searching into the grounds on which so many believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God. By way of preparing for the clearer treatment of the subject, it was pointed out that a revelation of the divine will is not an impossible thing, that God can give, and man receive, such information as would lead to a due knowledge of sacred truth: that a revelation is probable, as it was likely that God would impart the knowledge of Himself in order to make His intelligent creatures happy, to secure their love, and to remove erroneous ideas concerning the Deity. We then saw that a revelation, if granted, must be by means of Inspiration; this Inspiration being defined as a *special* work of the Holy Spirit, distinct from His *general* illumination of believers: and the reasons why such a distinction must be admitted

were given. The more immediate subject of the volume then came before us, viz., that the Inspiration necessary for a revelation is claimed on good grounds by the Bible. At this point arose the consideration of the term, "The Inspiration of the Scriptures," with a notice of the different theories concerning it. We found that the divine and human elements, which enter into the composition of the Scriptures, had given rise to various opinions, according as each was made predominant : that the term "verbal Inspiration" is sometimes improperly applied : while the *words* of Scripture are to be regarded as inspired words. The investigation of the subject was now brought to this point, that we may with perfect confidence regard the Bible in every particular as the Word of God. Several proofs of this were then adduced : viz., the Antiquity and Preservation of the Bible ; the Unity of Sentiment which pervades it ; the innate force of the Scriptures in whatever language expressed ; their suitability to all dispositions of men ; the fact that the authors of the Bible were men of a small and peculiar race ; the fulfilment of prophecy ; several peculiarities observable in the language of the

Scriptures. These were gone into in detail ; and to them was added the claim which the Scriptures make to Inspiration ; but this was alluded to more for the sake of noticing one particular passage of the New Testament, viz., 2 Tim. iii. 16. Other heads of proof were then briefly stated, e.g., the grandeur of the truth contained in the Bible, its converting power, its civilising and exalting effects, and the immemorial doctrine of the Church on this subject : and having mentioned all these evidences, the necessity of taking them together was urged. A most important part of the subject next claimed attention, in continuing the proof of Inspiration,—the connection between the Old and New Testaments. This was illustrated by the way in which the writers of the New Testament and also the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, treated the Old Testament Scriptures. Many instances were given from the pages of the New Testament (which was assumed to be a genuine and authentic book,) of the reverence in which the Lord and His Apostles and Evangelists held the Old Testament, and of their deep regard for it as the inspired Word of God. Thus it appeared to be our duty, as Christians, to set a similar

value on it : indeed, to refuse to do so was shown to be tantamount to denying the truth of the Apostles and even of our Lord Himself. From the Inspiration of the Old Testament, thus established, that of the New was seen readily to result, the latter being the completion of the former, and therefore equally from God : while, in addition to this proof, another was found capable of being deduced from the authenticity and genuineness of the New Testament. Having brought forward such a mass of evidence to establish the proposition under review, it became necessary to notice, and reply to, the difficulties and objections which the subject has provoked. Before stating several such in detail, some preliminary remarks were made by way of caution, for instance, that objections should be strictly weighed,—that they often spring from preconceived notions,—that the Bible is to be judged of by its evidence and not by its difficulties,—that the objections have been frequently made and met,—that they spring from undue reasoning,—that difficulties may be expected. The following were then stated, and answered, as objections ; that Inspiration was not needed for writing the historical parts of

the Bible,—that inaccuracies and immoralities are found in those said to have been inspired,—that the Bible is at variance with science,—that it is historically inaccurate,—that miracles cannot be received,—that internal contradictions are found in Scripture,—and that trivial matters are mentioned which could not require Inspiration. The duty of candour was urged when considering the question before us, and the need of comparing the plentiful proof for, with the insufficient objections against, the Inspiration of the Scriptures: since it appeared that the difficulties which exist are not without their use, that they may be, as others have been, removed in course of time, and that our ignorance of many circumstances is the too probable cause of their existence.

The result, then, of the whole enquiry which has been prosecuted surely is that the Scriptures are inspired, that they are the Word of God, that in reference to them we may say, "Thy Word is truth." Our investigation has been conducted in a spirit of candour; and candour calls for the conclusion at which we arrive. In the Scriptures we are possessed of a Divine Revelation. We are not left to the "in-

Result of the  
whole en-  
quiry.

WILL IN IT, INDEED, TO REFUSE TO DO SO WAS  
SHOWN TO BE ANNIHILANT, NOT TO DENYING THE TRUTH OF  
THE APOSTLES AND EVEN OF OUR LORD HIMSELF  
FROM THE INSPIRATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT,  
BUT ESTABLISHING THAT OF THE NEW WAS SEEN  
NECESSARY TO RESULT, THE LATTER BEING THE COMPLETION  
OF THE FORMER AND THEREFORE EQUALLY FROM GOD :  
WHILE, IN ADDITION TO THIS PROOF, ANOTHER WAS  
FOUND CAPABLE OF BEING DEDUCED FROM THE  
AUTHENTICITY AND GENUINENESS OF THE NEW TES-  
TAMENT. HAVING BROUGHT FORWARD SUCH A MASS  
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BY WAY OF CAUTION, FOR INSTANCE, THAT OBJECTIONS  
SHOULD BE SCARCELY WEIGHED,—THAT THEY OFTEN  
SPRING FROM PRECONCEIVED NOTIONS,—THAT THE BIBLE  
IS TO BE JUDGED OF BY ITS EVIDENCE AND NOT BY  
ITS DIFFICULTIES.—THAT THE OBJECTIONS HAVE BEEN  
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the Bible,—that inaccuracies and immoralities are found in those said to have been inspired,—that the Bible is at variance with science,—that it is historically inaccurate,—that miracles cannot be received,—that internal contradictions are found in Scripture,—and that trivial matters are mentioned which could not require Inspiration. The duty of candour was urged when considering the question before us, and the need of comparing the plentiful proof for, with the insufficient objections against, the Inspiration of the Scriptures: since it appeared that the difficulties which exist are not without their cause, that they may be, as others have been removed in course of time, and that our knowledge of many circumstances is the too partial one of their existence.

The result, then, of the whole inquiry has been prosecuted since the Scriptures are inspired, that God, the



ternal light" of man, a light whose flashes are in all directions setting men on contrary paths, a light which never yet has guided any to know the Lord God as He must be known for salvation, peace, and purity of heart : but since man is evidently a dependent being in those things which most contribute to his happiness, God has given him that on which he may and must depend for the attainment of the highest happiness of which he is capable.

Practical conclusions.

It remains now only to notice briefly some few of the practical issues which spring from such a study as these pages are intended to assist.

What is the reader's opinion as to the Inspiration and authority of the Scriptures?

One result is that we should earnestly enquire into our opinion of the Inspiration and authority of the Scriptures. How important is it that we should from our inmost hearts really look upon the Scriptures as the Word of the living God ; and that we should be prepared to assert their Inspiration, to rejoice in their truth, to acknowledge their paramount authority. If we are really servants of God we must do so ; for here is the Master's Word. If we hope to stand firm in days of error and false doctrine we must do so ; for the Bible is the only standard of ortho-

doxy, and true men will speak according "to the law and the testimony." There is no proper Isa. viii. 20. room here for the exercise of a vain display of reason. Men must not overlook this part of the Bible, and reject that, and explain away another, because of difficulties, or inconsistency with particular systems, or opposition to preconceived opinions. Enough is before us to show whose word we have in the Scriptures : enough, therefore, to teach us to receive them, to try our systems by the whole fair proportions of Scripture truth, and to mould our opinions to the Bible, not the Bible to our opinions. Once admit the Inspiration of this volume, and its authority is supreme. No appeal lies from it. In the presence of such a standard there can be no turning to oral tradition, or to that teaching which exalts reason as the word of God within man, and so of greater value than external revelation. These two, tradition and the supremacy of reason, lead at once to the extremes of superstition and lawlessness ; and the extremes meet in one point, the neglect of God's truth. There is an urgent call for clear and decided views on this great subject. Every religious opinion must be tested thus, "How readest thou?"—and the Luke x. 26.

fact that God speaks in the Scriptures should be welcomed as a foundation on which we may be “stablished, strengthened, and settled” in all matters of Christian faith and duty.

1 Peter v. 10.

What is the effect of Scriptural truth on the heart?

Closely connected with the preceding enquiry arises another as to the effect produced by Scripture truth upon the heart, conscience, and life. Great indeed is the difference between impressions on the mind and understanding, and those on the heart and conscience. Now that we have seen so many reasons for receiving the Bible as inspired, we may the more readily turn to its pages and mark the effects which, as the Word of God, it is capable of bringing about. To it, under the operation of the Holy Ghost, are due

Psalms xix. 7, 8.

*Conversion*, that mighty, that thorough change whereby a man becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus; *Wisdom* from above which enables one to judge aright of sin, of self, of God, of time, of eternity; *Joy*, springing from forgiveness and a hope of glory; *Light*, which diffuses the knowledge of the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ; *Holiness*, with all its new desires and new satisfaction. How truly privileged the individual who has been made partaker of these spiritual benefits. Many evi-

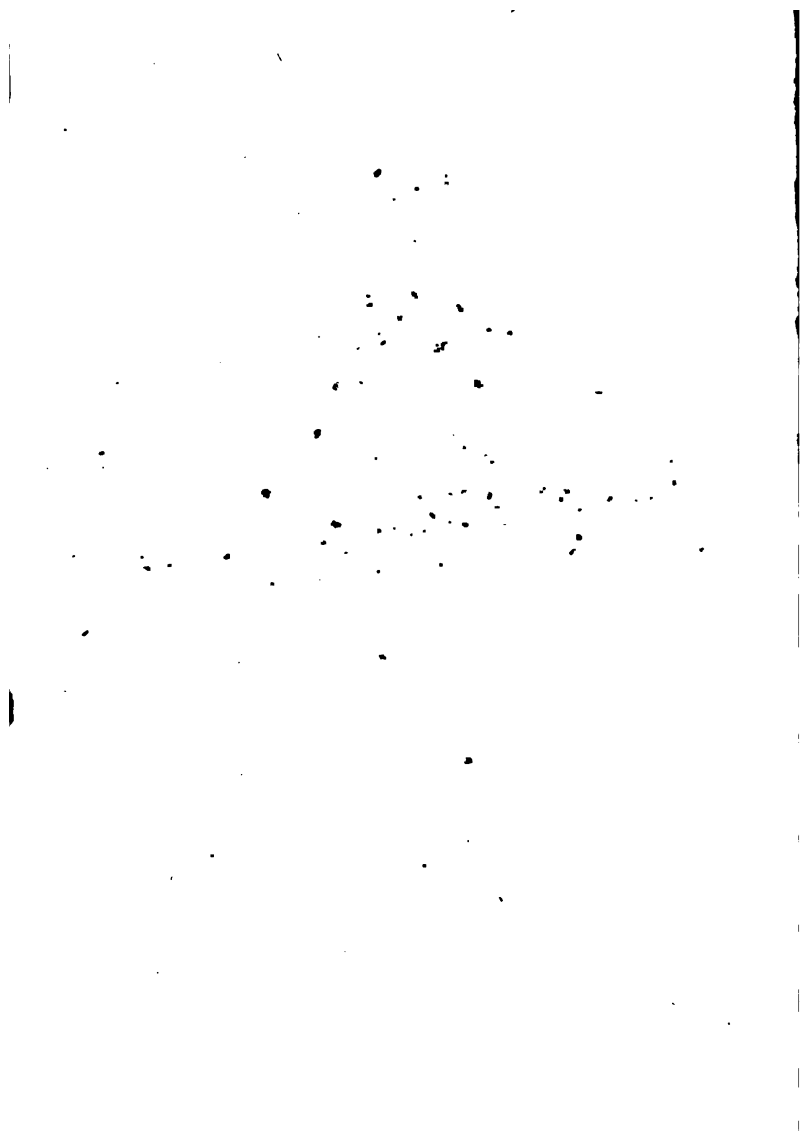
John xvii. 17.

dences of the divine character of the Bible have been adduced ; but none of them can be so truly convincing as that of experience. "He that believeth hath the witness in himself." 1 John v. 10. Compare Deut. iv. 35. Those can speak feelingly of the inspired truth of God's Word, who have felt its power and rejoice in its light : and while multitudes are ignorant, and will continue ignorant, of the *external* evidences in favour of the Bible, this most precious and most powerful *internal* evidence binds it to their hearts, and teaches them to cry to God, "Thy testimonies are wonderful, therefore doth my soul keep them." If, then, Psm. cxix 129. on the one hand, it is necessary to give a caution against wavering and uncertainty, it is no less so, on the other, to warn against mere intellectuality of religious belief. The assent of the mind is not enough. The Lord demands that His record should be accepted by the heart ; otherwise His declaration stands in all its force, "He that believeth not God hath made him a liar ; because he believeth not the record which God gave of His Son."

1 John v. 10.

And what if our hearts have been led to embrace the Scriptures as a gift from heaven ; If embraced with the heart, what if, to use the language of Locke, we "read







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